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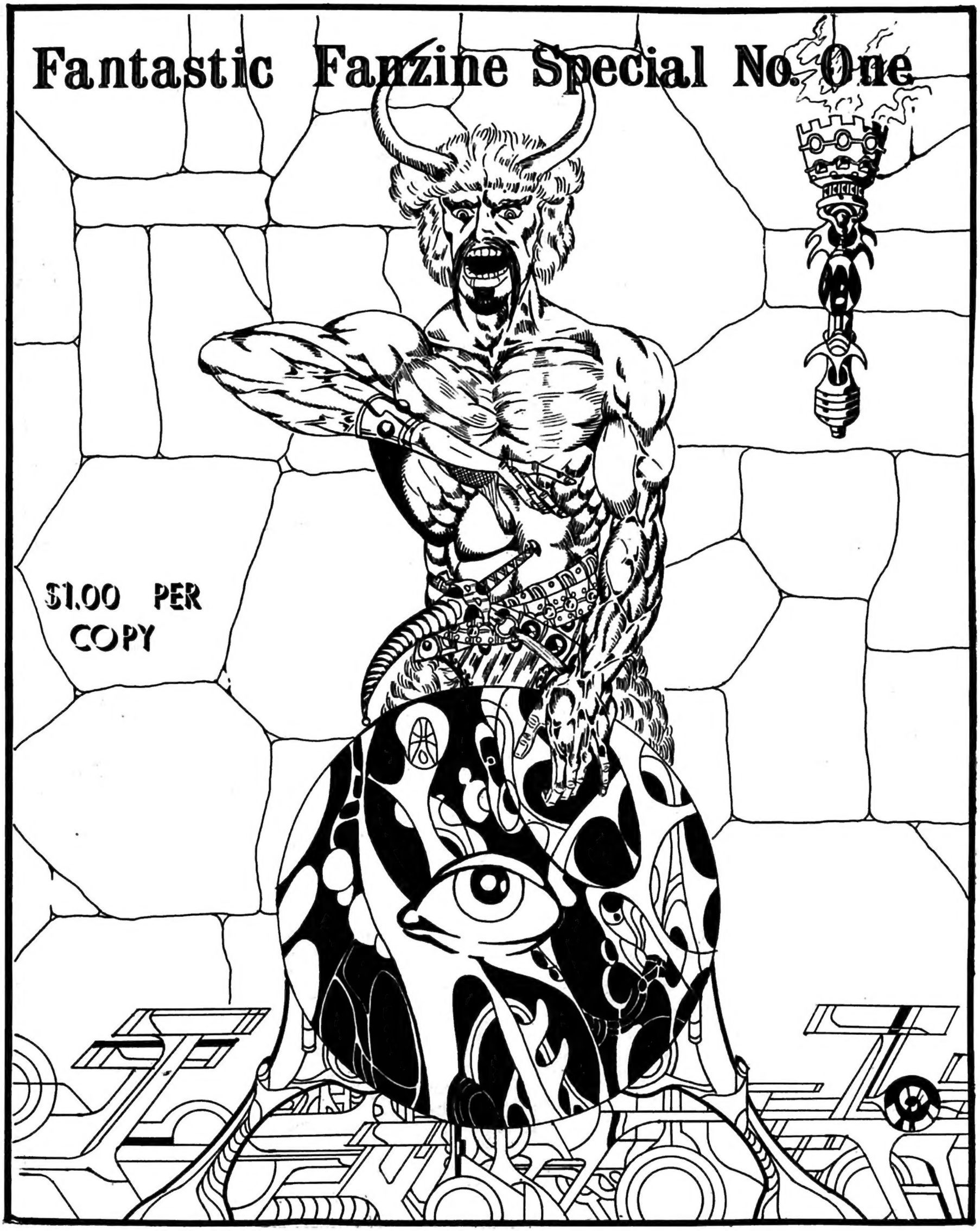

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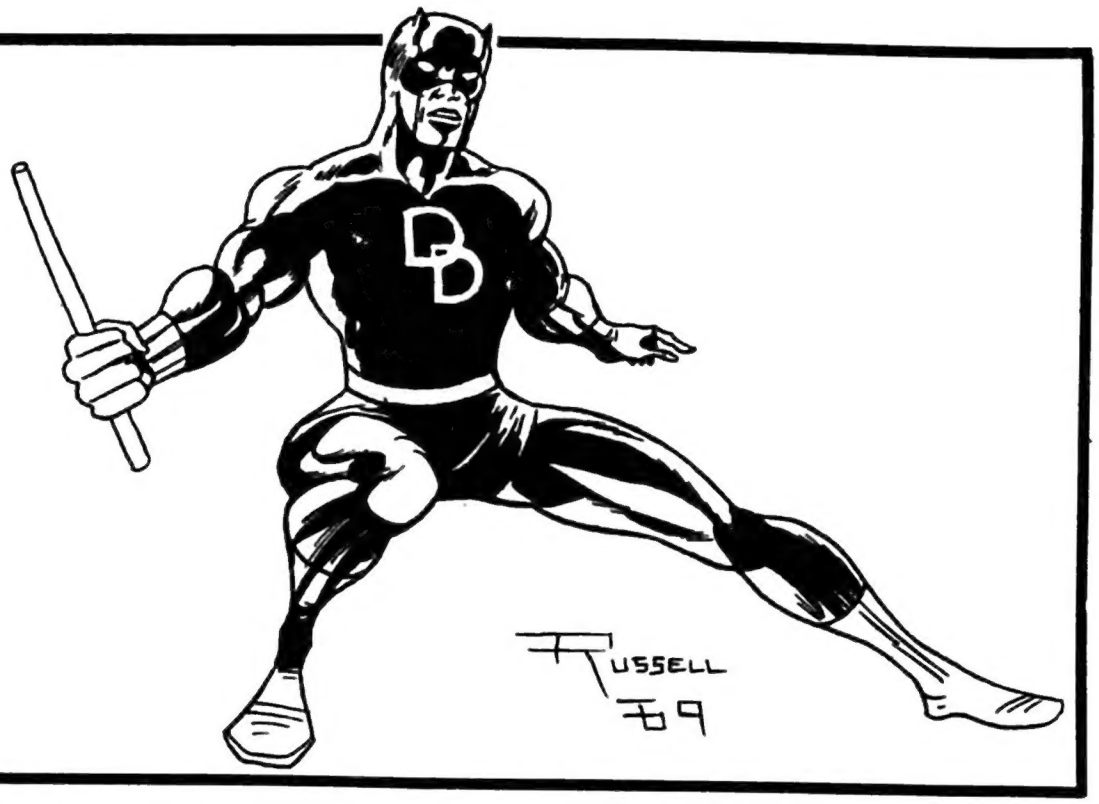

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STAFF:

Editor & Publisher: Gary Groth
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Staff Writers: Tony Isabella, Dwight Decker, Tom Crawford, Bill Cantey, Pat Janson, Gordon Matthews.
Pro Contributions this issue: Dick Giordano, - (D.C. editor), John Romita, Gene Colan and Don Heck.

SPECIAL DEBUT ARTIST: Robert Kline!
This issue of FF is dedicated to Jay Mike for all the help and contributions!

INDENTIA:

FANTASTIC FANZINE SPECIAL # 1: $1.00 @. Regu - lar issue: 60¢ @. Next issue out: # 11,due out Febuary 10th. I.O.C.C. Membership for the year of '70: $1.50. Subscriptions to FF: 5 issues for $3.00 or10 issues for $6.00. Send away to Gary Groth, editor, 7263 Evanston Road, Spring -field, Virginia, 22150. Back issues available are: FF 2,3,4 & 5: 40¢ @; 6*7, & 8*9: 60 ¢ @:; # 10: 50¢ @. F.F.F.F. membership: Only 50¢.

Posters of the Captain America cover for FF 10 by JIM STERANKO and posters of the back cover of FF 10 of ANT MAN by Dave Cockrum can be pur -chased from FF Headquarters: Both for only 25¢. NO PART OF THIE FAN MAGAZINE MAY BE RE - PRINTED WITH THE WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM THE EDITOR. All drawings in FF are the copyrighted property of their publisher. (D.C., Marvel)

Welcome to...

THE FANTASTIC FANZINE SPECIAL!! I (Gary here) have so many announcements to make this ish, I just hope I remember them all!! Hopefully.this ish will reach over 1,000 fans. Why this sudden boost in circulation? From 500 to over one thousand?? HERE'S THE BIG NEWS: FF is advert - ising in the Marvel comics!! FF, the third fan -azine to advertise nationally like this,needed something to boost circulation, and this should definitely do it!

Hopefully, I've worded the ad-to-be in Marvel Comics, so that FF will aquire quite a few 'new fans' that haven't heard of Fandom..! Fandom is much too small as it is now, & there are many perspective 'fans to fandom' reading comics, who just don't know we exist.

I have a tentative idea in the works that will require the help of about 10 comic book fans with some time on their hands. If you want to help, write me, and tell me.

Page Count

Many of you are probably wondering why F.F. 10 had 36 pages for 50¢, and why this SPECIAL has only 52 pages for twice the price. The reasons are painfully obvious: Putting an ad in Marvel costing over $400.00, a printing bill this ish of over $350.00, combined with the high cost of professional headliner, renting an IBM el - ectric typewriter, the posterboard for laying out FF and recently purchasing a saddle-stitch machine etc., it all adds up!! When our ad in Marvel comes out, though, it should sky-rocket us into the black once again, with more subers than you could shake a nuetron ray at! ...BUT there's only one slight hang-up: Our ads in Marvel won't show up until the June-July issues. We'll just have to struggle along till then. But, until June comes, FF will be in a slight...

CLUB MEMO'S

by GARY GROTH

$Depression$

It isn't a very bad one. I think that FF can manage, but all those expences have sure taken a chunk out of the ole' FF's treasury. Any and all donations will be graciously accepted, and if you really want to help out, carefully read page 48 of this issue, which lists most of the items for sale from FF Headquarters! See that majic word "most" up there? Well, there's still one item available that was omitted from that listing.

We are going to sell, at a very low cost, the ORIGINAL layout pages to FF 6*7, *8*9 and #10! All of these pages have the original artwork & title logo's on them; save for some pro work!! No full page illustrations will be sold;sorry! These original layout pages will rand in price from $3.00 to $8.00; no more; no less. All you have to do is tell me what pages you are int - erested in purchasing, and I will tell you how much they cost.

These pages are 11" x 14" in size, and are fit for framing. So help yourself, and help FF out of a depression today!!

Winners

Remember the contest we announced way, way back in FF 8*9?? Well, we sent out the contest sheets soon after FF 10 was sent out. The two winners sent them back to us, in just a couple days. The winners are:

GARY SPIEWAK 1st place
42 Malvern Drive
Clark, N.J. 07066

JAMES STRENLOW
3122 Gibbons Dr.
Alemenda, Cal.
94501

Gary won first prize, and chose the 20 assort- ed Marvel & D.C. comics. James came in second & recieved the autographed picture of Sal Buscema. Ironicly, each winner recieved what he wanted!!

My sincere thanks to the abive two winners and all the other Marvelites who sent in their 25¢ to play the Big Game. (Copies of the game are still available, for those of you who wanted to know what it looks like -- for only 25¢)!!!

More contests, with bigger and more prizes are in the works. I'm working on a contest that will give away, as first prize, an original page of an old Marvel comic. Worth at least 15 dollars!!! If anyone has any idea's as to what

kind of contests we could organize drop me a line!

New Contest

I've finally thought of a really worth - while contest to announce, with the best prize yet!! All you have to do is to think up a slogan for FF; for instance, Ford Cars has "Ford has a better idea"! Well, FF should have one too, & I think our readers are the best able to make it up! Rules to the contest are as follows:

1. There is no entrance fee; however, you must purchase FF 11 and 12 to participate.
2. Please send the slogan in on a seperate sheet of paper, typed if at all possible.
3. Please do not make it long! No more than 10 normal sized words, please!
4. Editor Gary Groth is the sole judge. Staff writers or artists may be called upon, for their opinion, though.
5. What about the prize? The prize is the original 11" x 14" advertisement, printed as the back cover of the RB*CC 66. This is FF's best back cover ad, and is a truly beautiful piece of work, acclaimed as such by such people as John Fantucchio and Robert Kline. It would occupy a worthy frame, hung in your room. If you want to see an 8½" x 11" copy of it, write to FF headquarters, and just enclose an SASE.

Sales Soar

Would you believe it?? FF 6*7 has sold over 350 copies; FF 8*9 has sold close to 400 cop - ies, and FF 10 has sold OVER 400 copies, and is nearing its 500 goal. There are just short of 100 copies left of FF 6*7, while there are a little over 100 copies left of FF 8*9 and 10 --so if you need them for your collection, buy them now, while they're still available! For more back issue onfo, read page 48. Although - it states that issue 4 & 5 are still available there are only about 4 or 5 copies of each a- vailable, so PLEASE order them now, while the supply lasts!

There isn't an Interview woth the Comics Code Representitive this issue, because no repre -- sentitive showed up at the Scarp Con. He was supposed to be in the panel with Jim Warren & Dick Giordano, but just never showed up. That act of neglect brought Jim Warren to say some negative things about the Code.

While we're on the subject of the CCA, I might as well plug our campaign, and ask any 'zine editor's to do the same. For a full explanat - ion of the campaign, send 25¢ to FF HQ for the first I.O.C.C. NEWSLETTER, which contains a 2- 3 page article on how you can help out on this campaign. It gives addresses of who to write to get action etc. Also, you may purchase your Campaign Stationary for 1¢ per sheet; minimum order is 25 copies; price will diminish as soon as enough orders come in for it. Please order now. Thanx!

From now on FF will carry a contents page. Ev- er since FF 10 came out, and everybody saw the size of it, everybody and his brother clamored for a Contents Page...and we aim to please!!

Last ish, author, Mike Vitti started a 3 part article, analyzing Marvel's Immortals. I print -ed the first part last issue, and have waited for the second (and third) part ever since! Be -cause of this instance, and a few other reas- ons, heed this: Unless you are a well known

Sketch Of
SARGE STEEL
by pro
DICK GIORDANO

fan writer, if you submit an article, stretching more than 1 part, you must submit AT LEAST the first 2 parts beforehand!

Tony Isabella's column, The Windmills of my Mind was crowded out this ish, but will be back next ish, better than ever, with a word from Barry Smith!

Fan Eds

TAKE NOTE! I'd apprecaite it if all Fan Eds would contact me about a sensational new idea that MIKE O'NEAL and I collaborated on in the last few months. It isn't time, yet to release this news to the public, but when this "idea" comes thru, all of you will be the first to hear the startling announcement!

Campaign News

Duffy Vohland, (P.O. Box 70 Clarksburg, Ind. - 47225), head of our committee to revise the Comics Code has split the United States into 5 sections, with a sub chairman for each section: All questions, and suggestions should be sent to the respective chairman: Addresses and names are: Duffy Vohland has Ohio, West Virginia, Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Arkansas, Alaska and Hawaii. Tom Brown (43 East 28th Street - Spokane Washington - 99203) has Washington,Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska & Kansas. Mark Petach (68090 - Molinus Court, Apt. 1 - Palm Springs, California - 92262) has California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma & Louisiana. Kenneth Kraft (142 Main Avenue - Sea Cliff, New York - 11579) has Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, New York, Massechusetts, Delaware, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland. Jim Wilson (PO Box 15 - Alpharetta, Georgia - 30201) has: Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, South Carolina, North Carolina, Kentucky, and Virginia. All readers outside of the US,please send questions directly to me. An SASE would be appreciated! Each and every one of you should have something to say about this, & if we are to do SOMETHING...ANYTHING, then we must do it together. WRITE TODAY!

Vote For F.F.!!!

In the 1969 Alley Awards that is! The results of the 1968 Alley Awards were released a month ago, in The Comic Reader # 74. The voting ballot for the 1969 Alley Awards will possibly be sent out with Comic Reader #.76. I'd suggest all of you send away 15¢ for that ish. Send away to: TCR GPO Box 449, Flushing N.Y. 11352! And remember: FF 6*7, 8*9, 10 and this Special were all published in '69, so, if you feel it IS worthy, vote for FF as "Best Unlimited Reproduction Fanzine"! OK? OK!

Miscellania

A loud "JOB WELL DONE" goes to Al Grinage this ish, for illustrating our Text serial, "The Search"! And if you really want to see what Al can do, buy FF 11, which'll house, not only a Jim Steranko portfolio, but an AL GRINAGE portfolio as well.

The votes are all in, and FF is to remain this size indefinitely! Votes were about 99 to 1 in favor of this 8¼" x 11", wrap-a-round format!

Bill Cantey's FAN FICTION has been getting a tremdously good reaction from FF's readers, & you'll be happy to know that Bill has another short story slated for FF 11! Thanks again, -- Bill!

For all of you who haven't bought the SPECIAL, but have bought FF 11 and 12, we're sending you this issue, instead of 11 & 12. Please RE-SUBSCRIBE.

From now on, the number of the issue, your sub ends is on the outside of this envelope, with your address. "S" means this is the last issue you'll get, without re-subscribing, so send in that money, hear? If you send in money after December first, it hasn't been registered yet, so your old subscription will still be typed on your envelope.

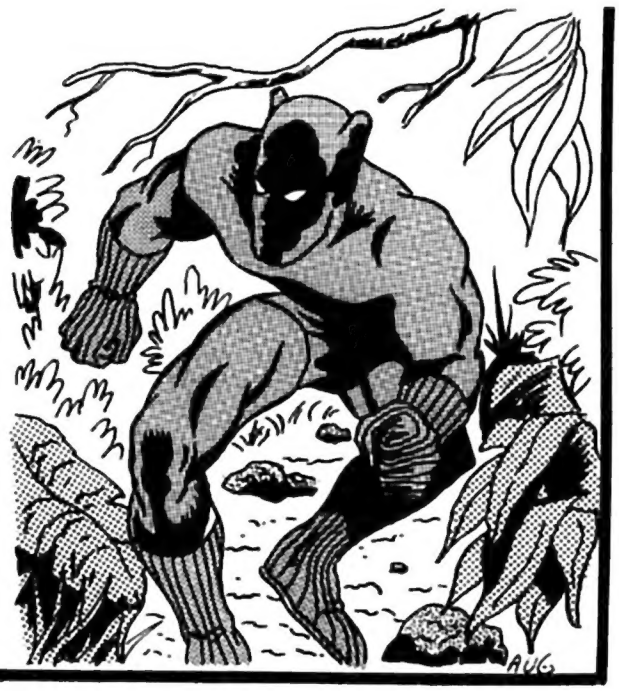
As you can no doubt notice, FF was laid out a different way this ish. I used a paste-up meth-od, instead of doing the layouts directly on the poster board. Personally, I think this new way is a bit awakward, but it was recommened to me by several 'zine eds, so I'm giving 'er a try. You'll also notice, an after-effect of this new layout method is that all articles are continued, on the next page, and end at the end of a page. Which do you like better??? This new way, or the old method, I used on FF 6*7, 8*9, and 10??

It's getting to that time in the Memo's page - to pull all the lose ends together: An in-depth report on The IOCC will appear next issue!! Many of you have asked for a MEMBERS PAGE,like the YSG of old had. Should we contribute a page to new members or not!? Mike O'Neal has asked me to announce the fact that I zipatone all of his work; not he!

As for the next issue, see page 50; it's going to be one helluvan ish, and I'd like to see everybody here!

MEET AL GRINAGE, STAFF Artist

"THE SECOND, IN A SERIES"



Editor's note: This is the second Interview in our series of Ametuer Interviews. The 1st, being Dave Cockrum's, and this, with Al Grinage. You can look forward to more "Ametuer In-terviews", as well as "Pro Interviews"in the future -ed.

F.F. Let's get right into your views on Fan-dom, Al: When did you first become interested in Fandom and Fanzines, and how did you dis-cover them?
AL: Well, as far as being a comic fan, I've always liked to read them. When I was small, I devoured Casper, Hot Stuff, Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck etc... When I got older, I began reading Superman and the long line of D.C.'s, until a friend of mine introduced me to Mar-vel's books, which brings me up to the pres-ent. The first fanzine that I ever saw was The Yancy Street Gazette. Some how or other, he got my name and sent me a sample copy (the sixth one in print at that time), It had no art at all, but the articles were good, so I continued to buy them.

F.F. What was the first fanzine to feature your great work, and how was it that this was the first fanzine you discovered and decided to work for?
AL: The aforementioned YSG was the first to show my work. After a few issues and corro--spondence with the editor's of the YSG,I sent them a couple pieces of my art. They must have liked them, because in issue # 11, they print-ed.a pic that I had done of the Angel (might I add, as I look at it now, I don't see why, because it was a very crude pic). So I sent a few more and I was hooked.

F.F. While we're on the subject of fanzines, what do you think of the present number, now being published?
AL: There are too many 'zines out that lack the quality needed for a good 'zine, and not enough that do.

F.F. Currently, what are your favorite 'zines and which ones do you contribute to?
AL: They are THE FANTASTIC FANZINE, the YAN-CY STREET GAZETTE II, and E PLURIBUS MARVEL, (now known as the Essence).

F.F. What is it that arouses your interest in a particular fanzine?
AL: First off, the art. Secondly, the articl-es. I like articles that offer constructive critisism and comparisons. Thirdly, the way it is printed. Proper printing and layout add to the quality of a 'zine.

F.F.How do you feel about your work in the Yancy Street Gazette, as compared to your work of today?
AL: I feel that there has been a vast improve-ment, but I still have a lot to learn.The im-provement is just a beginning. I'm finally getting the hand of it.

F.F. When did you first become interested in drawing, and what did you learn to draw first?
AL: I liked to draw as far back as I can re-member, sort of like a duck taking to water!! I always liked to draw the Walt Disney char-acters, when I was younger. I don't know why I just liked to.

F.F. Did you, or are you attending any sort of art school?
AL: No, only art that I took up in high school. Although I plan to attend an accredited art school after I finish college.

F.F. Time for an easy question -- when & where were you born?
AL: I was born on Dec. 24, 1951, in Braddock, Penn., a small town outside of Pittsburgh.

F.F.Now what about the comics of today? - what do you think of them, as compared to the com-ics of yesteryear?
AL: It's like comparing the Academy Award win-ning motion pictures of today to the first a -

ttempts of the silent movies of yesteryear.The improvement is really fantastic; virtually everything from story to art to coloring to lettering etc... The only gripe I have about the comics of today are the size of the panels...! They are too big. The full pagers are really eye pleasing, professional pieces of art & all that, but when it's just a full page of some - one's face with just one word or thought balloon to the whole page, I feel that it is just a wasted page. I'd rather have a full page of action panels. Steve Ditko's Spider-man gave you a lot of the smaller panels, thus allowing more story and yet, kept its quality. I'm all for cutting down the size of today's panels.

F.F. Are there any fields other than c o mics that particularly interest you?
AL: Probably commercial art; advertising and that sort of thing.

F.F. What about your future? Any plans to go into the comic field?
AL: First college, then art school. I'll probably minor in art at college. I have every intention to try it in the comic field. But only after lots of work and when I feel I'm ready.I believe that I can draw the costumed character -s pretty good, but there is so much more to learn. There is layout, perspective, design... etc... that really take a lot of work and experience to put out even a plausible display of art. Also, I'm still establishing a style of my own, which, as you know is essential to every artist.

F.F. Are there any people in the comics field that have influenced your work?
AL: Just about everyone. I study each & every artist's work. I analyze what I like and don't like and keep it in mind when I portray my own work.

F.F. Everybody has their favorite artists and writers. What are yours?
AL: I knew that you'd throw a tough question in somewhere. Wellllll, it depends on the strip: For instance I wouldn't think of anyone else than Jack Kirby doing the Fantastic Four.I also like him the best on Thor and the Hulk. On Spider-man, definitley Steve Ditko. On Dare - devil, Doctor Strange and Iron Man, it would be Gene Colan. On The Avengers, The Silver Sur -fer and The Sub-Mariner, John Buscema. X-Men - Neal Adams, and S.H.I.E.L.D, Jim Steranko. I think the best all around artist is Jack Kirby although, I equally enjoy Neal Adams, G e n e Colan and John Buscema. The favorite writers part would have to be a perfect tie between Stan Lee and Roy Thomas. If I didn't read the credits, I wouldn't know who wrote what.

F.F. Let's get right into your art now, Al:::: Could you explain a little of the technique you use in your pencilling and inking?
AL: I usually try to visualize the character!! Before I forget the pose, I throw it down as a stick figure, making adjustments here and there. I sometimes look in the mirror to check for foreshooting and muscle structure, and if I'm not sure, I check up on the costume design I use a 3H pencil to start my sketch,switching later to an HB to go over the lighter guidline -s. If, by then I am satisfied with the pencil -ling, I will proceed to ink it. If the finish -ed rendation bothers me in someway, I either change it or do the whole thing over.

F.F. What materials do you generally use in your inking?
AL: I like to ink the whole piece of artwork with a number 102 Crow Quill Pen. Then I fill in the black areas and accentuate lines with a number 4 Sable Brush.

F.F. How's your working speed?
AL: I can't really say. I've never had anyone to compare myself with. I guess I'm fast. Like I said, I don't know. It usually takes me from 8 to 15 minutes to do a real good pic. I do my best work at about 3 or 4 A.M. in the morning, while listening to music. When I get into a good drawing mood, I stay up the whole night through, and draw and draw and draw.

F.F. Who would you consider to be the best fan artist?
AL: I like Dave Cockrum. He has a very unique style. I seem to get the impression that his inks are rushes, though. I, myself would love to try my hand at inking one of his pencils.

F.F. What company, in your opinion is the best all-around company?
AL: Marvel, of course.

F.F. What, in your opinion is the best all-time strip ever published?
AL: The Fantastic Four.

F.F. Who, in your opinion is the best fan-writer?
AL: Probably, Tony Isabella.

Thanks, Al for a very informative Interview. I hope this helps the younger artists just breaking into Fandom -ed.

RESOLVED: REVISE THE CODE?

by Tom Crawford

"Adapted on October 26, 1954 the enforcement of this Code is the basis for the comic magazine industry's program of self regu - lation."

After fifteen years, just about any code of regulation is due for revision and/or modification. The question is: how far should revamping go or not go? Here, I will discuss the Code of the Comics Magazine Association of America, Inc., and present my views on a possible modification:

"CODE FOR EDITORIAL MATTER
General Standards Part A
1) Crimes shall never be presented in such a way as to create sympathy for the crim inal, to promote distrust for the forces of law and justice, or to inspire others with a desire to imitate crimminals."

I agree with the last two points.As for the first, the editors should probably use their own discretion. On a recent episode of the TV series "DragnetL 1969", viewers saw a story dealing with a young man who, because of cruel treatment in real life,retreated into comic book fantasy and stole posters of his heroes. The viewer did not feel any de -- sire to imitate the crimminal, but felt pity for this pathetic young man, none-the-less.

(Editors Note: TV medium is much larger or more popular among the "kiddies" than comics - it seems that the Code is directed to - ward the wrong medium -ed.)

Suppose Marvel were to publish a story about a man living in the very worst section of New York City's rat-infested ghettoes; a man who found himself forced to steal because he could get no job, yet had to keep his family alive. Such a story, if handled correctly (including accurate illustrations of ghetto life) might make an excellent social commen - tary. When conditions are so bad that 1 must steal to keep his loved ones alive, something must be done.

"3) Policeman, judges, government officials & respected institutions shall never be present -ed in such a way as to create disrespect for established authority."

We live in an age when it is considered fashionable to have contempt for authority!!! People refer to policeman as "fascists" and "pigs". Yet, the police have a job; to pro -- tect us citizens. They, like we, are only hum -an. Thus, portrayal of corruption in authoritative institutions, while it does exist, is the last thing the majority of honest offic - ials need.

"6) In every instance good shall triumph over evil and the crim inal for his misdeeds."

This is not always true in real life, & Marvel seems to be realizing this. How many times has Dr. Doom been brought to justice & punished for his misdeeds, as the law would prescribe?

"7) Scenes of excessive violence shall be pro -hibited. Scenes of brutal torture,excessive and unnecessary knife and gun play, physical agony, gory and gruesome crime chall be eliminated."

Possibly, it would be better if "excess -ive" were defined a bit more clearly by the Code. Many people feel too much blood can have a bad effect on children (and I agree), but so can too little.

TV and the movies show a person being hit by a bullet and wincing a lot, and making a little joke. Bleeding is small. Thus some youngsters probably get the impression that a bullet does not hurt very much. A bullet hurt -s...tremendously)I speak on the advice of doctors, not actual experience, Thank Heaven)! A great deal of bleeding results, especially if a major artery or vein is hit.

Actually, few people really know what a gun shot wound is like. The Columbia Broadcasting System Television Network (CBS) feels that if they did not edit its Viet Nam war films, but showed them as they are received - with all their blood and gore, and horror ---

that such a hue would be set up by the amer - ican people that the US government would be forced to withdrawl all American troops from Viet Nam within a week.

What I am saying is: Comics should show enough blood to give their readers the full impact of its horror, and to try to discour - age blood-letting in real life, nut no more.

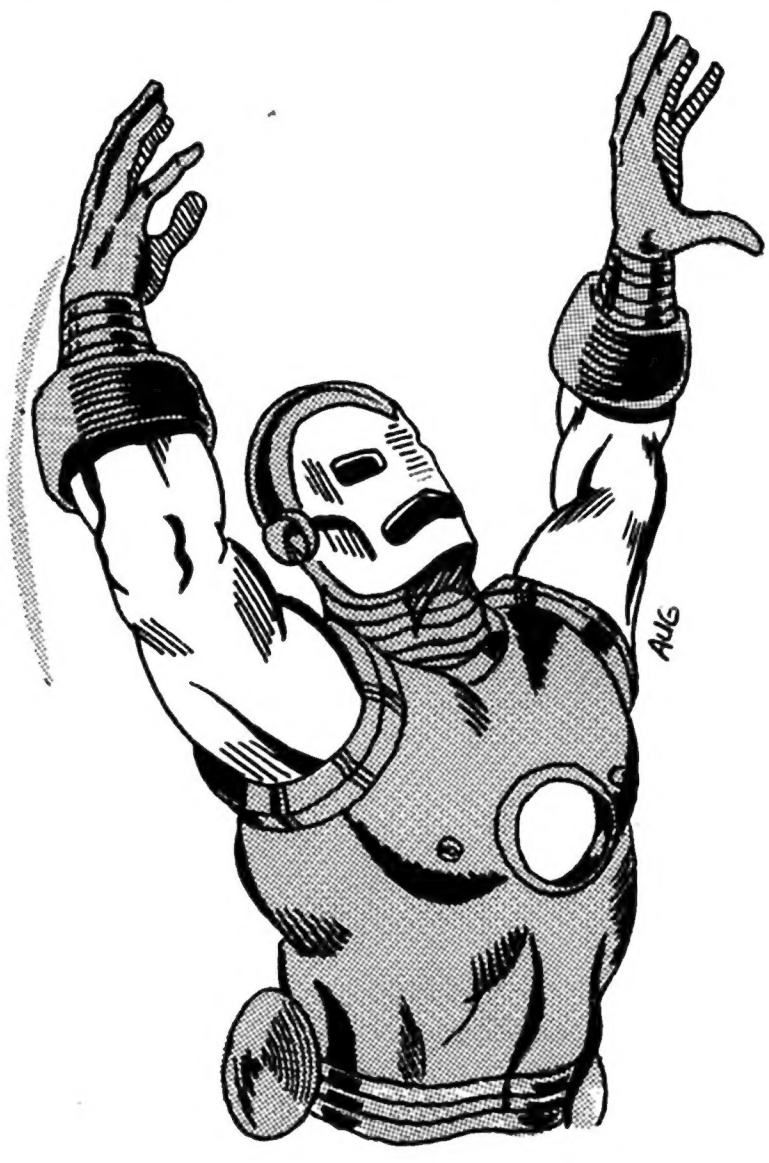
"9) Instances of law enforcement officers dy -ing as a result of a crim inals activities should be discouraged."

If the death is caused by a criminal murderering a law officer, I agree that this should be discouraged. However, a lawman be- ing killed while attempting to, and/or accom- plishing the, act of apprehending a criminal or saving the life of a citizen, this is an- other matter. The primary job of law enforce- ment officials is to protect the citizens. If they are portrayed as being ready to lay down their lives doing this job, it may help bring them some of the respect they need and deserve.

"COSTUME
3) All characters shall be depicted in dress reasonably accepted in society."

Some think this should be changed; they should read it again. It is so worded as to allow the costumes of heroes, heroines, vill- ains, villianesses, etc., to follow the curr- ent trends of fashion.

"MARRIAGE AND SEX
3) Respect for parents, the moral code, and for honorable behavior shall be fostered. A sympathetic understanding of the problems of love is not a license for morbid distortion."



There are some people in the world to -day-the hippie movement, for instance -- who disagree with these priciples entirely. I am not saying they should be exploited or glori- fied, but in Marvel's stories which deal with today's problems, they should not be ignored.

These are the areas of the Comics Code Authority which I believe should be revised - and I have given my opinions why. I am only one person; some may agree with my viewpoints and some may not. However, I am sure all ag - ree on one thing: Society, comics and their audiences have changed a great deal since 19- 54. If the comics Code does not change them, it, and perhaps theentire comic idustry will crumble into nothingness.

* THE END *

"THE GODFATHER"

BY BILL CANTEY

The gray dawn did little to dispel the chill atmosphere overhanging the bleak community. But the inhabitants neither complained of the cold, nor expected relief. For seals, un-like humans, adapt and thrive in this frozen land; nursing their young beds of snow.Newborn pups, white and plump, are content to lie im-oble, safe from most natural enemies. But, not from man! And just beyond the distant drifts, waiting for full light, lay the child slayers. In less than an hour, baby seals would be club-bed to death and skinned before the eyes of their helpless mothers. Leaving behind, piti-fully small, peeled carcasses to consummate the annual rape of a simple community in a grim hell-harvest.

Now the executioners stride forward to confront the slow thinking seals. The mothers huddle close to their young; small, anxious eyes are fixed on the cruel invaders. Then, be-fore the first club can fall, a whirring soun-d fills the air. The men look skyward, puzz-led; but the seals seem strangely comforted. Indeed, the mothers turn their attention to their babes, and regard the men as a threat no longer. A vague form, obscured by the sun's bright rays, decends rapidly. Suddenly, a bar-nicale encrusted sea chest lands heavily in the area between the seals and the men. Burst-ing on contact, the chest reveals gold in var-ious forms, all type's of gems in different settings, and coins worth many times their me-tallic value. But, before the shock of a fall-en treasure fades, a more fantastic phenomen-om occurs. For alighting on the huge trunk is a giant of a man; powerful muscles stand re-vealed by his nearly nude condition. Although, the temperature is almost freezing, the stran-ge figure is clad only in briefs made from the hide of some unnamed , submarine creature. Slanted sea-green eyes blaze from a sharply triangular face. A momentary glance back at the seal colony reveals gill-slits behind poin-ted, satyr-like ears. Ankle wings still ve-brate slightly, giving evidence of his power of flight. Then his full attention is turned upon the would-be murderers.

"DROP YOUR CLUBS!"

The more superstitious Indians and Eske-mos complied at once, falling to their knees in the process. When the leaders hesitated,the stranger was among them at once. Several men were knocked floundering, clubs were broken like matchsticks, and no one doubted who was in charge. Then, each man was called forward in turn to scoop up a small fortune, and to be scrutinized by those awful eyes that turned ice-blue as they looked into a man's very soul. The nostrils dilated slightly, to catch and re-member the individuals' scent. Thus, every i-dentity was indelibly recorded for possible future reference.

The remainder of the treasure was piled on trays from the broken chest; half to be de-livered to the fur traders and half for the villagers' treasury. When it was done, -- the stranger spoke again.

"NOW LEAVE! DO NOT RETURN!
DISTRIBUTE THE WEALTH AS I HAVE DIRECTED!
IF YOU DO NOT OBEY; I WILL KNOW!"

And the blazing blue-green eyes did not lie when they promised death to the death-dealers.

As the marauders turned away, one, more determined than the rest, produced a gun from inside his parka. The flying fish-man was fac-ing the seals, speaking in gutteral, barking toungue. Two bullets struck his broad back & incredibly glanced off, leaving angry red welts on the strange one's sleek skin!! The next two shots went wild; then the gun, along with two fingers, was torn from the assainant-s hand. Nor did the creature's rage expire until the pistol was reduced to junk & pain-fully inserted into a natural opening of the cowering killer's lower body.

No more words were spoken. The seal butchers took back a burden more grim than the bloody pelts of murdered pups. After sundown, the Aurora Borealis lit a tranquil scene of moth-ers and babes. That night -- that season -- & ever after.

THE END

INTERVIEW: WITH *Johnny Romita*

EDITORS NOTE: On October 12, 1969, we sent John Romita this written Interview. We got it back in just one week--October 13th!!! This, then was the result:

F.F.: Can you give us a brief capsule history of your career?
Mr. Romita: Three years of art school at New York High School, three years of lettering & touch-up on Coca-Cola posters (Forbes-Litho.) Two years of army recruiting posters, six years of comic pencilling and inking for Stan Lee, (Captain America, Westerns, War etc....) Seven years of Romance books for D.C., and from 1969 to now, back to Stan.

F.F.: Is there any particular reason you were picked to draw Spiderman after Steve Ditko?
Mr. Romita: Probably just at the right place at the right time. Beyond that, I'm not too stylized and can adopt to various types of stories.

F.F.: Why is it that you only draw Spiderman?
Mr. Romita: I draw fairly fast, but plotting stories from scratch takes me longer than most. I put a lot of thought into continuity and character development and we feel it's worth it!

F.F.: Do you know why Steve Ditko left Marvel and went to D.C. and Charlton?
Mr. Romita: Not a clue!

F.F.: Who do you think inks your art the best and why?
Mr. Romita: Most of our inkers are the best so it's a toss-up. If I could, I'd like to complete it myself. Shadows and patterns some-times comes to me after pencilling.

F.F.: When did you go to work for Marvel?
Mr. Romita: See question one.

F.F.: Did you ever work for any other compan-y besides Marvel?
Mr. Romita: Yes, D.C.!

F.F.: Is it hard work being an artist?
Mr. Romita: I hit a period in which I think it's unbearable, but invairably I find all the work worth it. We work long, hours generally, but satisfyingly.

F.F.: What are your working hours?
Mr. Romita: They vary - some days 8 to 10 hours, others 12 to 15 hours. I start at 7:30 - 8:00 AM and finish anywhere from 5:00 PM to 2:00 AM!

F.F.: After hearing that, I hope that fan's will appreciate your work more! Why do you work for Marvel instead of another Comic Company?

[ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN F.F. NO. 1]

Mr. Romita: Stan Lee respects the artist & his interpretations, but the main reason is Stan's effort to upgrade and improve comics! It make's for improvement for all concerned!!

F.F.: Who did you first draw when you joined Marvel?
Mr. Romita: I began with Mystery Stories (1950) Captain America (1953-1954) and Western Kid (19-50-1957).

F.F.: Who do you consider to be your favorite artist?
Mr. Romita: Jack Kirby and John Buscema, and cut my teeth with Milton Caniff.

F.F.: How many issues of Spiderman do you have planned in advance?
Mr. Romita: We plan what the characters will be doing two or three issues ahead but mostly we -'re issue to issue on the plots and which villains appear.

F.F.: How many issues of Spiderman do you have done in advance?
Mr. Romita: Right now, with number 68 on the stands, I'm beginning number 72. But Mooney is about to start number 71. Number 70 is inked & going to print.

F.F.: Are the Vulture and the Kingpin going to team-up?
Mr. Romita: No present plans for such a team!

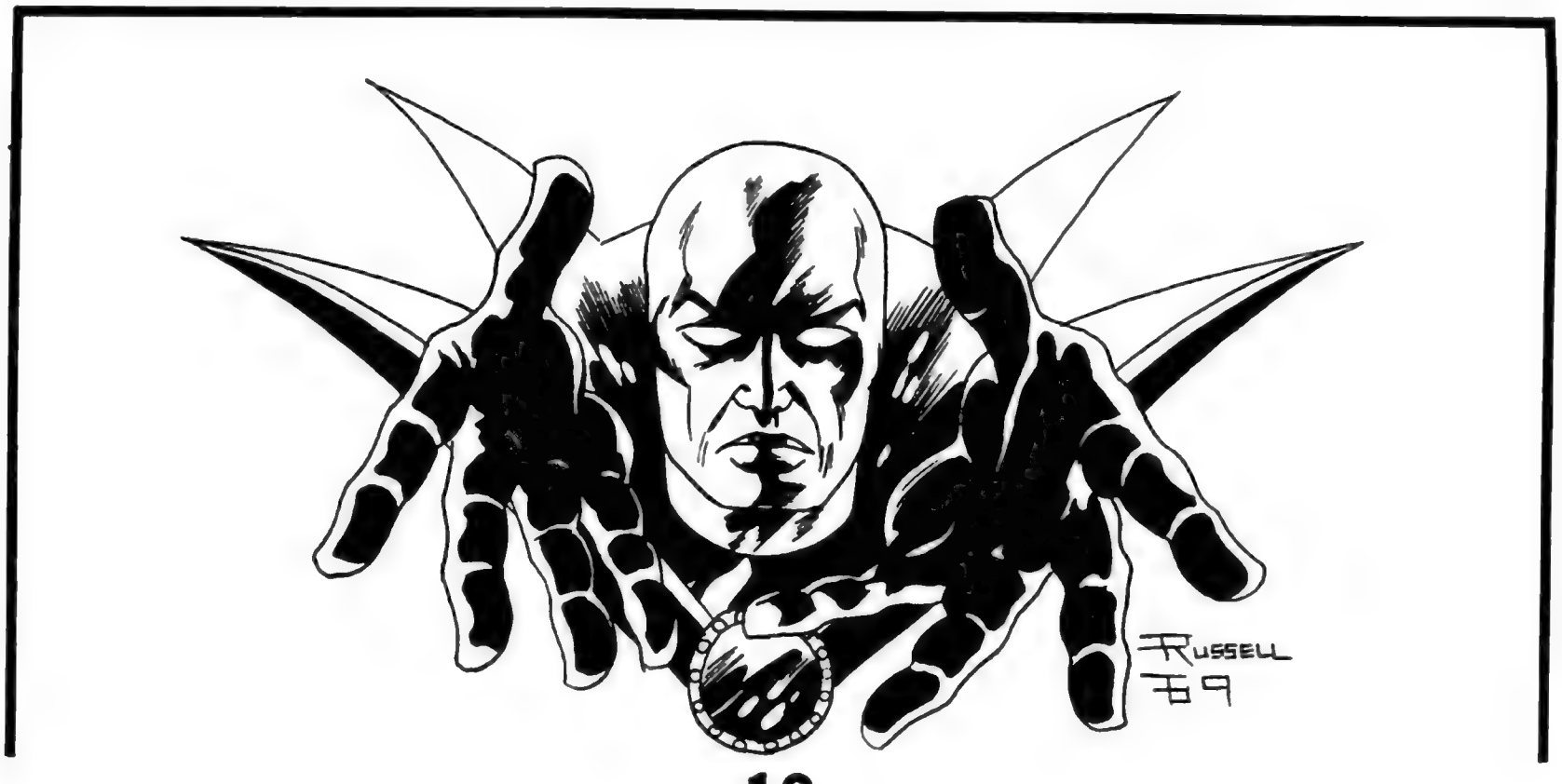
F.F.: What will be in The Spiderman Spectacular # 4?
Mr. Romita: Undecided yet!

F.F.: Is Aunt May ever going to pass away with one of her sudden heart attacks, so as to give Spidey all the freedom he needs?
Mr. Romita: Aunt May is pretty important! Pete would have no secret identity problem and without it, Spidey would be no different than other Super Heroes. (I'd miss her!)

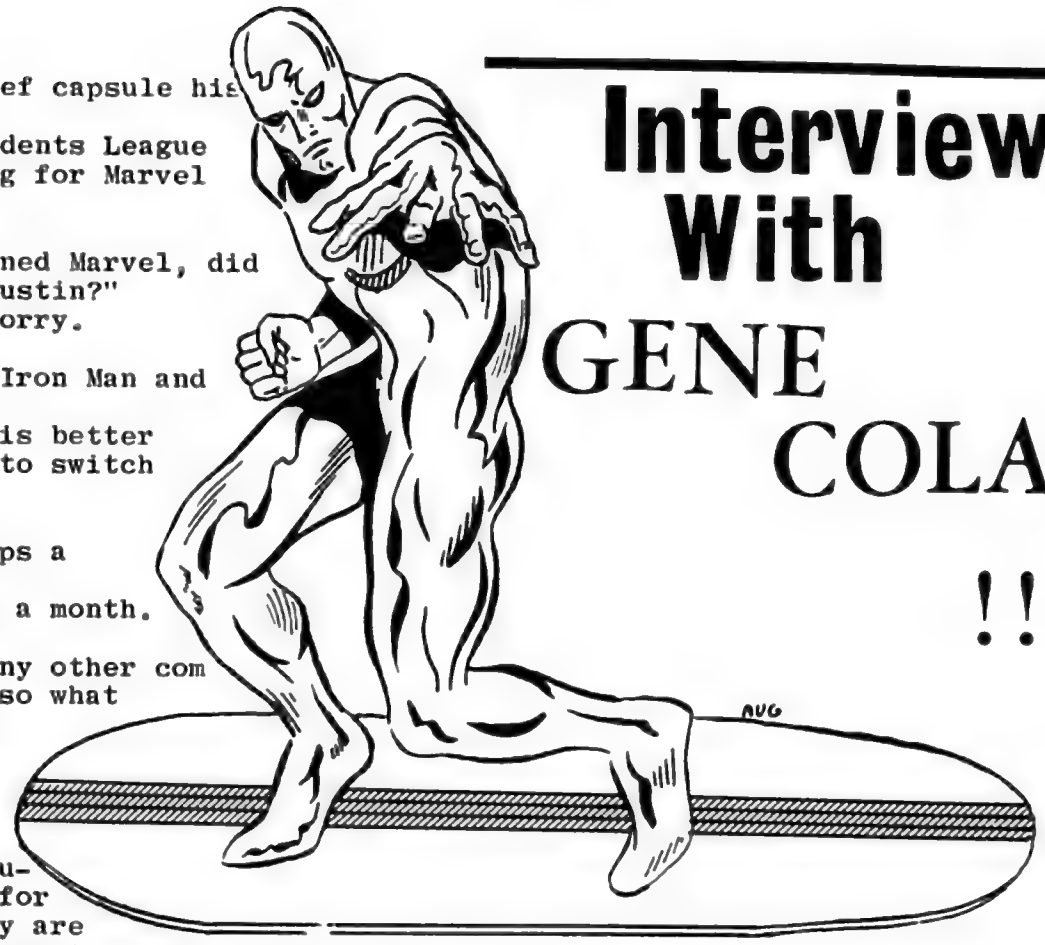
F.F.: Who makes up all of Spidey's wisecracks?
Mr. Romita: Stan Lee created Spidey, and all his diologue, personality and wisecracks.

F.F.: About how much money does an average artist make a year?
MR. Romita: It varies too much; from very little to very high.

F.F.: Do you draw the webs on Spider-man's costume, or does the inker?
Mr. Romita: The inker does, but I used to pencil all the webs too! On break downs and lay-outs I can't take the time!



Interview: With GENE COLAN !!!



F.F.: Could you give us a brief capsule his-tory of your career?
Mr. Colan: I attended Art Students League in New York. I've been working for Marvel for 22 years.

F.F.: Why, when you first joined Marvel, did you use the pen name, "Adam Austin?"
Mr. Colan: PERSONAL REASON. Sorry.

F.F.: Why were you taken off Iron Man and put on Dr. Strange?
Mr. Colan: Stan Lee feels it is better for the artist and the strip to switch around.

F.F.: Could you do three strips a month? If not, how many?
Mr. Colan: About three strips a month.

F.F.: Did you ever work for any other com-ic group besides Marvel? If so what one? If so, why did you leave them and go to Marvel?
Mr. Colan: I began at Fiction House, New York, worked for Marvel and National (D.C.) & Creepy and EErie and now exclu-sively for Marvel. My reason for being with Marvel is that they are a magnificent company with a great staff, and Stan Lee is the greatest!

F.F.: Who do you think inks your work the best and would you like to ink your own work?
Mr. Colan: Frank Giaquoia and George Klien.Yes-I would love to ink my own work.

F.F.: Who do you consider to be your favotite artists?
Mr. Colan: A few are Hal Foster, Will Eisner, and Milton Caniff.

F.F.: If you had a choice, what 2 Marvel title-s would you like to draw? Why?
Mr. Colan: I accept each title and each book as a challenge and endeavor to turn it into a bestseller, if it isn't already one.

F.F.: Is Matt Murdock ever going to marry Kar-en Page? If so, in what issue?
Mr. Colan: I haven't any idea, I now longer do Daredevil.

F.F.: What new villian(s), if any, do you have planned for Daredevil?
Mr. Colan: Same as above.

F.F.: How many issue's do you have planned in advance?
Mr. Colan: The production department would have to answer that one.

F.F.: How does Marvel get the affect of a real picture? (Example: Dardevil # 45:)
Mr. Colan: Artwork is superimposed over a phot-ograph.

F.F.: Who do you think your strongest villian is? (The one with the best character, flexibil-ity, etc...)
Mr. Colan: Dr. Doom.

F.F.: Do you like drawing Dr. Strange as well as Iron Man? Is he harder to draw? Easier?
Mr. Colan: Dr. Strange is more challenging!!!! Unusual.

F.F.: Which strip(s) in your opinion needs im-provement in Marvel?
Mr. Colan: I've never given it any thought.But I would say in general that a great effort go-es into each book that Marvel turns out.

F.F.: Is it true that if the selling rates of the X-Men don't rise, Stan will discontinue them?
Mr. Colan: I don't know.

F.F.: What villians and story plots do you have in store for Daredevil and Dr. Strange?
Mr. Colan: Can't say. It's mostly up to Stan and Roy Thomas!

F.F.: Could you tell us D.D. fans anything a-bout the upcoming fight between D.D. and Stilt-man?
Mr. Colan: As stated before, I no longer do D. D.

THE END.

(Reprinted from issue number 3!!)

AN INTERVIEW WITH DON HECK

Editor's note: Several months ago, I aquired this DON HECK Interview from the now de-funct Yancy Street Gazette. I paid quite a bit of money for this Interview. While at the 1969 Comic Art Convention, I met Gavin Roth, editor and Publisher of "Nine Penny Gnus": It seemed that Gavin (or one of his "staff")took this Interview with Don and sent it to the YS-G. When the YSG just quit publishing, Gavin printed his carbon copy of the Interview in his own 'zine. Since I did pay quite a bit of money for this Interview and since the editor of the YSG didn't have the common courtesy to contact Gavin and tell him that he sold the interview to me, I felt that I still had the right to print it. Gavin gave me his permission to "reprint" the interview, so for the benefit of those who have not seen Gavin's 'zine, read it here, in the FF SPECIAL.(since Gavin was nice enough to let me reprint this interview, the least I could do is plug his 'zine, "Nine Penny Gnus" -- 15¢ -- from Gavin at 16 Gregory Drive // Lake Ronkonkoma, N.Y.// 11779)!

F.F.: Mr. Heck, could you give us a brief rundown on your career as as artist?
Mr. Heck: Oh, that's gonna be fun. Well,I went to Woodrow Wilson High School in Queens (N.Y.) and I took commercial art there for 3 years; then I took two years at Community College!!! Actually, I was studying for advertising, although most of the time I've actually done com-ics. Then I went to work for Harvey Publications, at paste-up and white paint for about two years. Then a friend of mine decided to start his own comics---uh, Media Comics I think --about '52, and I quit Harvey and went to work for him for two years. He folded when that 1954 crash hit the comics field, and I went to work for Marvel at that time. And that's it!! I've been with them for about thirteen - fourteen years.

F.F.: When they get fan-letters at the Bullpen --do you read any of them?
Mr. Heck: I get some of them through.Generally the ones I get through are asking for original drawings--which is like impossible to do.

F.F.: What I was getting at was, in general, what is the fan reaction to your inking your own work?
Mr. Heck: I think sometimes it's been favora-ble--uh, the reason I wind up doing mostly pen-cils is because they feel as though it's toug-her for them to get a penciler than it is for them to get an inker, so whoever they feel can do pencils to what they want, why, they sand-wich them on for pencils.

F.F.: Do you prefer inking your own work?
Mr. Heck: Yes, I prefer to ink it, other than one or two fella's up there who I think are pretty top-notch, and that's Frank Giacoia and Joe Sinnott.

F.F.: Is there any major change in the artists lineup at Marvel planned?--Any newcomers ex-pected?

Mr. Heck: Quite a few of the guys that are up there now are actually just transfers from DC originally. Frank Giacoia for one, and John Romita...quite a number of them.

F.F.: Oh, when did John Romita work for D.C.?
Mr. Heck: Oh gee, he did love stories for them for a number of years. He did some beautiful girls stories for DC until about three or four years ago. Werner Roth was originally with Marvel, then over to DC, then back with Marvel again.

F.F.: Who decided that you should do the layouts for the X-Men, and what's the point in it?
Mr. Heck: Stan Lee and Sol Brodsky--I really don't know...It's just that they think the layouts are better for what I can do for 'em, though that's debatable. It's like anything, it's a personal taste.

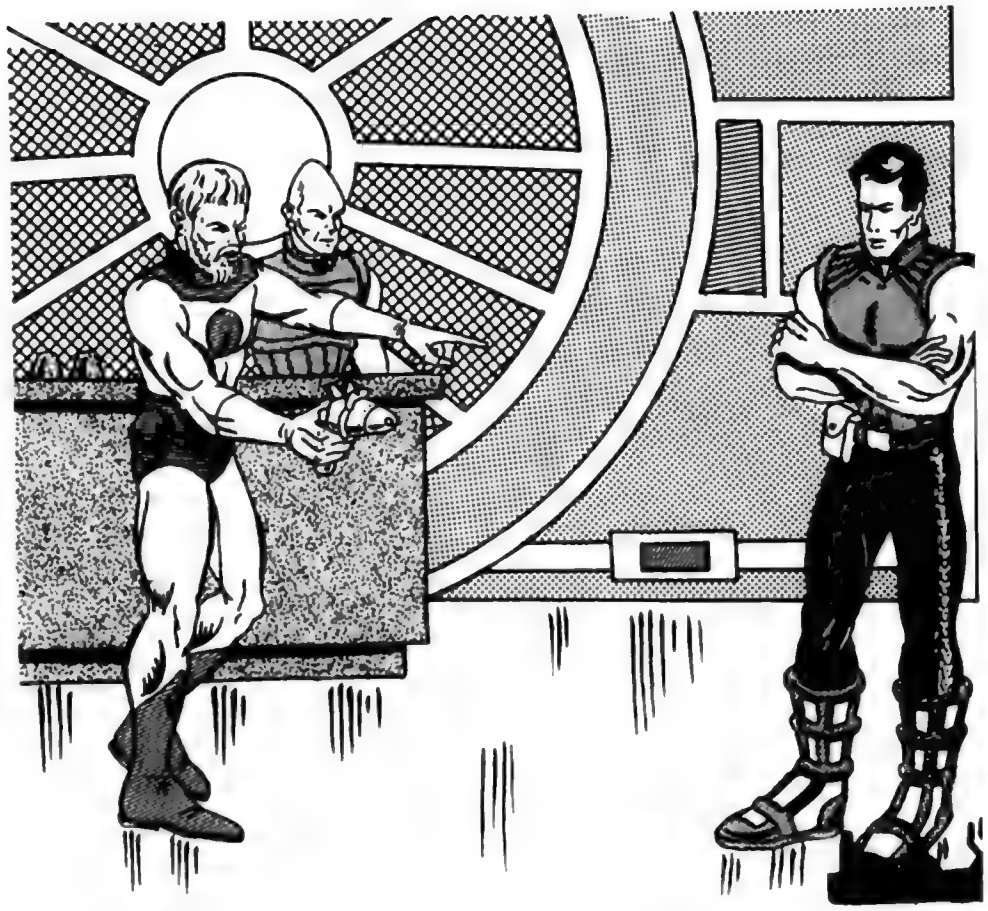
F.F.: I guess you've heard about JIM STERAN - KO taking a one issue synopsis and telescop - ing it into three issues--what do you think of that?
Mr. Heck: Well, it's very hard, because of the fact that, sometimes you get a story which doesn't want to go into 15 pages...it wants to go into 30 pages..oe something like that!! I think the only possible thing you can say about that is that he should've gotten in touch with them. And I think that's just a matter of communications;...just got a little fouled up. At that point I thought I was off the breakdowns, or rough's or whatever you want to call them, and strictly on something else, and I didn't even know about it.

F.F.: How far in advance is a strip prepared for publication?
Mr. Heck: Well, let's say ish # 3 is on the stands; you're generally working on six,which is three months.

F.F.: And is all that three months taken up in producing, or is the strip just sitting around for any length of time?
Mr. Heck: No, because it's got to go to the engraver, then back to get colored, and then back to the engraver to get finished off, and to the printer and so on and so forth.

F.F.: Could you give us a quick run-down on producing a comic?
Mr. Heck: First of all, well, now they're working with the synopsis, in which you get the synopsis, and the penciller generally takes it from there and does a full drawing - of it and sends it in. It, then get's sent to the writer who writes the story over the draw -ings, then to the letterer, then to one inker, back to them to be edited, and then sent to the engraver. From there, what they call a Silver Print is sent back, and that's colored by Stan G.

F.F.: Is their any end in sight for the ino - vations in Marvel's 1968 Facelifting job?
Mr. Heck: Not as long as you've got some - one like Jack Kirby who's always coming up with some new ideas...he really is great in my mind. He's been doing that for twenty - eight years as far as innovations, cause he started the "lovething" in about '52, which changed the whole field quite a bit.



ARTWORK:
ALVIN U. GRINAGE

LAYOUT:
TOMAS M. CRAWFORD

F.F.: You mean he originated the love story?
Mr. Heck: Not originated, but, oh, he may have, but, not in the full extent of love stories as such. But he came out with that First Love and a bunch of things like that!! All of a sudden everybody jumped on. And the same with what he calls his long underwear characters, y'now, the Superheroes.

F.F.: What do you think is Marvel's best done strip at present?
Mr. Heck: Fantastic Four.

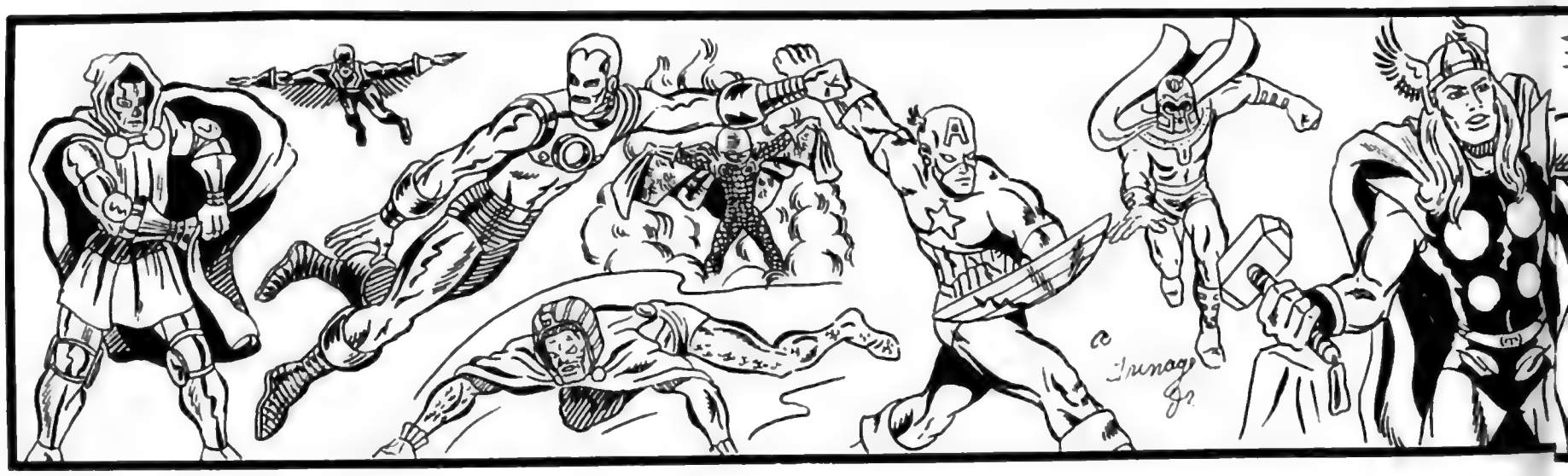
F.F.: Which artists at Marvel do you admire most?
Mr. Heck: I have three of them: Jack Kirby,

F.F.: Mr. Heck, do you have any advice to young aspiring artists?
Mr. Heck: Yeah...become an engineer. But aside from that -- you mean as far as breaking into the field and that?

F.F.:Yes.
Mr. Heck: Well, it's a tough nut to crack, - but actually, if they're good enough, they can just bring good samples around and try at different places. It'a about the only thing you can do. They'll either accept it because it's good ..... what I would say is if you're drawing, let's say, something like the Fantastic Four, something which you feel they can use, don't copy panel for panel,because that doesn't show any originality.They would want to see something that is drawn on your own.

F.F.: Thanks very much, Mr. Heck, for a pleasant Interview.

DISSECTING



Analyzing the immediate composition of Marvel could possibly lead to an experience as frustrating as an hour's attempt at figuring out the anatomy of an artichoke. However, I shall make a staunch attempt to provide such a study as precise as possible.

Stan Lee is the immediate nucleus of the surrounding elements which, united, mold into the principal factor known as the Marvel Com - ics Group; published by one Martin Goodman...! These two men seem to be the actual brain trust of Marvel -- the decision makers. How - ever, Stan seems to have been given the reigns so to speak, enabling him to make nearly all of the major editorial policies. Thus, Stan,as stated earlier, is, in effect, the Marvel Com- ics Group. Therefore, the responsibilities of Marvel's success -- and failures fall upon the shoulders of Mr. Lieber.

The surrounding elements consist of, mainly, the types of scripts and titles pub -- lished by Marvel, namely: Adventure, War, Wes- tern, and Comedy. Now, these themselves branch into various directions of their own,while, at the same time, each changes constantly under the editorial directions of Stan Lee; if in -- deed, they can honestly be termed "directions". Writers and artists are changed so constantly that it is nearly impossible to finger a Mar - vel Comic that stands as stable publication month after month.

Most prominente on the Marvel line are the Adventure and War strips. Although the war strips (Sgt. Fury and Captain Savage)are high- ly outnumbered by the adventure strips, they definitley are a major catagory -- stand - outs in the Marvel Comics Group.

War epics produced by Marvel are entire- ly different from most others, as they always have been. Particularly under the writing dir- ection of Gary Friedrich. Although they still continue to follow the same pattern set by com -ics; to present somewhat exaggerated fiction, they are now beginning to maintain fairly new perspectives -- which only the Marvel Comics Group could dare put into action. One such per -spective is the all too truthful fact that war is hell, and Gary attemptes to concieve such aspects with his pen, and it might be ad -ded, is doing quite well. However,although the plots are believable, Marvel does continue to incorperate a somewhat exorbitant style of stories, coupled with the exaggerated charac - ters of the comics world. But these elements simply are what make a comic book.

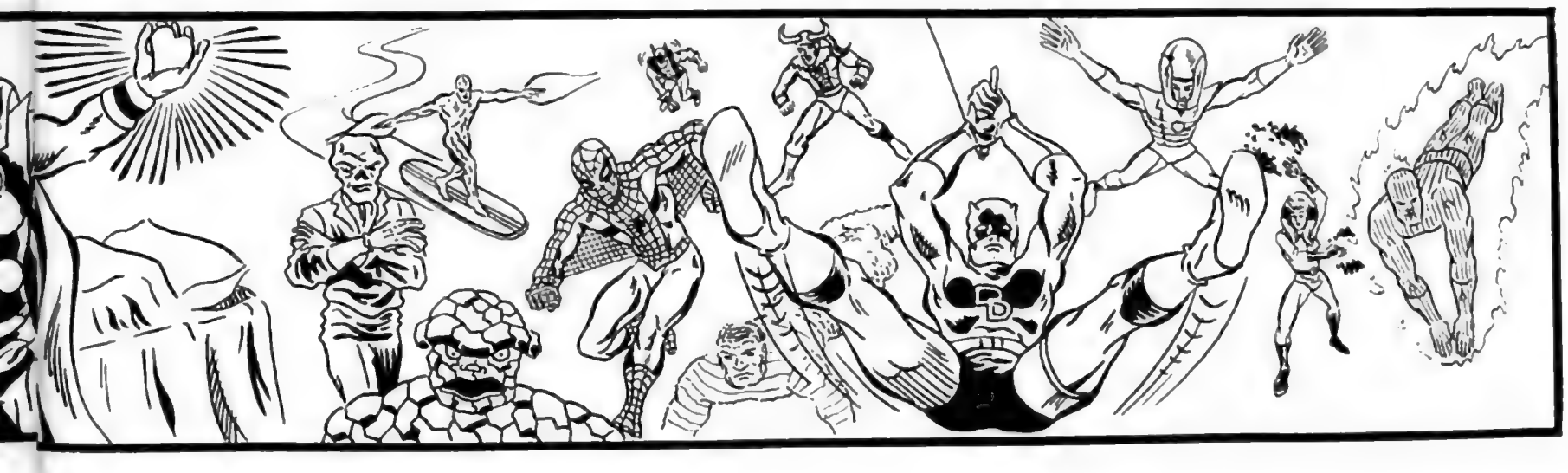
The western brand of comic also plays a part in the Marvel Comics Group, although they are not quite as prominente as most others.Ob- viously, the lack of sales, due to their un -- popularity, is the reason why the Marvel staff fails to pay much attention to the Westerns..! This is unfortunate, as each one has his dis - tinct difference and very good chances to ex - cell to becomming the best in the field, deal- ing, of course, with such a branch as these..! Therefore, it would be to Marvels favor to fur -thur promote these mags; the correct handling could, concievably, boost sales considerably.

The vital role as life-line to the Mar- vel Comics Group obviously falls towards the adventure strips, since the dawn of the so - called "Marvel Age of Comics" with the advent of such creations as The Fanastic Four etc.., the adventure -- or more precicely ----- The Super Hero type strip has taken on a new guise; they are in an entirely different foc- us than such was ever seen before.

Since the comics' revolution sprouted in 1960 - 1961, many different characters have been developed; coupled with a different style of writing that has never been seen be- fore during the short thirty year period which could be classified as the life/history of the comics world. Possibly the prime exam- ple cosists of the ever popular Spider-man,in which many new tacticts, so to speak, were in -corperated to result in a final product that would be the most different, yet nearly tota- lly believable character ever created to grace the pages of a comic strip.

Such attractional tactics concist of in -depth sub-plots in which inner problems and modern hang-ups dwell through-out the pages of such comics; basically published by Martin Goodman. The reasoning behind such inner mean -ing is to attract a greater readership --- a readership that could "identify" with these new characters. And, of course, the reason for a larger readership would be, logically,high-

The Heart Of Marvel by Pat Janson



er sales. Why not? That's what they're in buisness for...

No longer does the super---egotistical, completely invulnerable hero exist. It is the age of anti-heroes, where each character can, and most likely will be affected by some dramatic problem, whether mental or physical.Yet the most common will possibly continue to be personality problems; a tormented individual with an infieority complex or somebody struggling to learn his identity -- his true self. (Daredevil is the perfect example). Even in the so-called "Superhero groups" are constant -ly torn apart by inner problems and hostil - ities, or a self-indulged member; such as the case of Captain America and the constantly shifting Avengers.

Thus far, such motivated scripting has proved to be quite successful, however it has not operated without a flaw, as many things do not.

Faulures are most common in the world, today, and they have not over-lloked the Marvel Comics Group. One of the most controversial collapses concerned the now termenated Ghost Rider. Sales has not been up to expectations, through the immediate fault of the Marvel promotion department. An excellent character with un-limited potential, the Ghost Rider was never actually given a fair chance. Unlike most titles, on the Marvel line, G. R. was never fully represented by any advance advertisement to speak of. This failure in promotion caused, without a doubt, the swift demise of the Ghost Rider; which, by the way, was extremely popular among those who had discovered it. (REFER TO ISSUE # 10, NOW ON SALE FOR 50¢ FOR AN IN-DEPTH STUDY OF GHOST RIDER). This seems to be the first such oc - curance, and thus far, the only one of its kind. Just seven issues of a magazine doesn't produce much income!

Another fallback was Marvel's futile attempt at humerous publications; i.e. -- The satirical Not Brand Echh, which was an exact take-off on the popular Mad Magazine. Possibly the major fault contributing to the can -- vellation of NBE was this lack of originality. Lacking, not neccessarily in the stories them -selves, but rather in the type of publicat - ion. Supposedly, the sales had been extreme - ly successful and its popularity was undoubted. Yet a year or so later, the magazine had grown tiresome and somewhat redundante, and

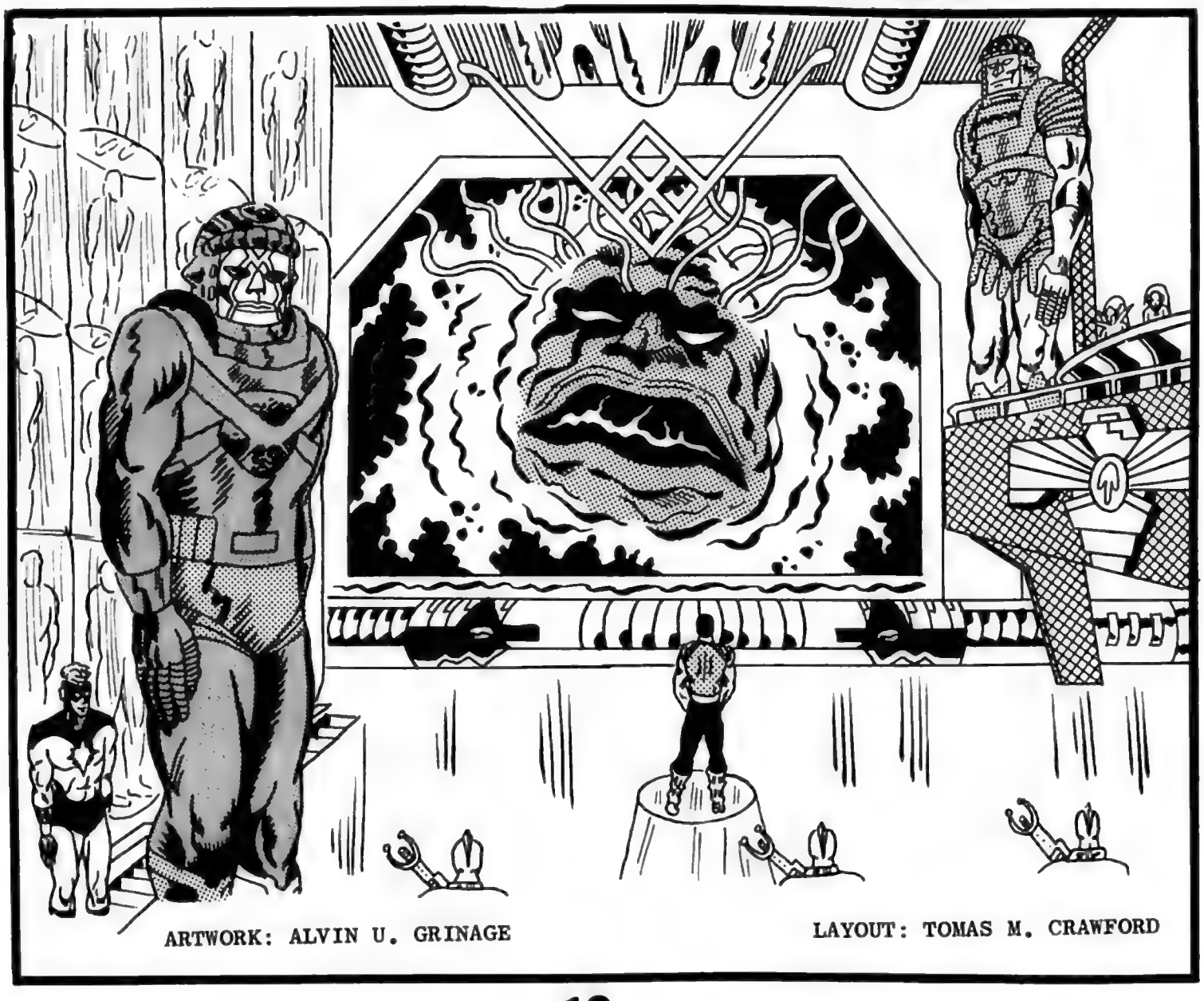
it was soon obvious that Not Brand Echh had lived its life. Therefore, a Marvel Comic which had a most encouraging beginning & ended in arupt failure; simply because of Mar - vel's rediculous attempt at parody, trying to monopolize on an aspect that had already been successfully motivated by the publishers of Mad Magzine. It's a wonder that it lasted on the market as long as it actually did.

Have you noticed those silly little rec -tangular shapes in the lower corner of certain panels scattered throughout any given- issue? Every comics editor uses them, mainly to pass onto the reader and editorial comment or such. Marvel is no exception, however they utilize the boxes in two different manners..! One way is the common usage for editorial- comments or footnotes, the other purtains to Stan's sacrin attempt at wity humor, wit that is not humerous at all. "Sly Stan" is not so sly after all, as these "one liners" often hurt the story itself. They tend to break the mood of the story, making the script entirely meaningless. Possible, Stan has recently recognized these facts -- as these comments have been slowly dwindling from the pages of Mar - vel Comics, and perhaps they will soon disa - ppear entirely, to return only as the senc -- able remarks such that are used by other more polished editors of the buisness (Gior - dano, Schwartz, etc.).

In recent years, Captain Marvel is the most prominente character failure. Captain Marvel seemed doomed to misfortune right from the start, as Marvels lack of originality once again returned to haunt them. However, the first of many dents, so to speak, occured in a controversey concerning the name, rather than the character itself. Less than two years ago, the well known Myron Fass leveled, a lawsuit against Martin Goodman, Stan Lee, & Gene Colan. Marvel, on the ropes managed to get off the hook by agreeing to purchase the rights to the name. "Capt. Marvel", which had twice been a popular character -- of differ - ent origin -- in the earlier years of comic - dom. However, Mar-vell now seems to be faulter- ering somewhat, as poor handling of artists & even writers has hurt the character. A swift change had better be in the making, or Marvel may soon find itself with another bomb on its hands. The last thing Marvel needs is another cancellation.

Be it as it may, whether criticism or praise is leveled at Marvel and Stan Lee, they still are the Marvel Comics Group. Never has there been anything like it, there still isn't and there probably never will be. You simply can't get away from it. These compose the heart of the Marvel Comics Group, and as we all know it is the heart that makes the machine run. Af -ter all...you've "gotta have a heart".

** THE END **



ARTWORK: ALVIN U. GRINAGE

LAYOUT: TOMAS M. CRAWFORD

The Fan Article Article by

"Those who can. . .do
Those who can't. . .teach"

DWIGHT DECKER

It seems that every time the mailman de-livers, he brings, along with the seed catalogs, dirty movie ads, Religious propaganda & other junk mail, and even a letter from a fan friend (sometimes), at least one letter which goes something like this:

"Dear Dwight:
I have seen your articles in Marvel Mir-ror and I think they are very good. I also saw your article in MCR # 2 about fans being sexual misfits, and while I'm only twelve, I know that when I'm your age, I will be a sexual misfit just like you. But that's not the point of this letter. My friend and I are put-ting out a 'zine of our own called FANDOM LIGHTHOUSE, which will be news and columns to light the way of the younger fans who don't know anything. However, we don't know anything either, so could you write one of your GREAT philosphic-psychological columns EXACTLY like you do for Marvel Mirror?

Yours For Fandom,
Nelson E. Oliver

P.S. Please make your article 16 pages long & send it by tomorrow. We know you'll want to write for us because we just sent in a full-page ad to the RB*CC saying you were doing articles for FL!"

I used to write articles for everybody who asked me, but as I got to be better known in Fandom, there just got to be too many re-quests and I had to start turning people down. Incidentally, editor Groth got his bid in just in time: unless Bill Spicer or Tom Reamy write (and they'll have to be extra polite), Gary is the last editor I'll be writ-ing for, for awhile.

The way I see it, there aren't that many fan-writers. Lots of artists, but not that many writers. There are even fewer <u>good</u> writers.

What constitutes a good writer?
He is someone who can choose a subject and discuss it interestingly and intelligent-ly.

That's it. Admittedly, Fan writing is a "fun thing" and standards are lower than eleventh grade English Class. However,at the very minimum, an article must be both interesting and intellegent -- and it's astonishing how many fan-writers are incapable of either. Much published material in fanzines is so much junk: is it any wonder editors write pleading letters crying their type --- writerribbons out to people like Greg Kishel Mark Evanier or Tony Isabella -- people whose writing is interesting and intellegent -- or Dwight Decker (when they can't find Kishel, Evanier or Isabella)?

Even though Mark and Tony attempt to write for anybody who asks them (Greg and I are more snobby), obviously they can't write everything. Comics Fandom has enough fan-editors and artists -- it needs writers. GOOD writers. Look, with this fanzine going out to 600 people, there ought to be quite a few of you out there who can write half-way decently, and with the chronic writer shortage, you're practically published writers already.

What can I write?--Is that what you're asking? To answer that, we'll look over the various kinds of articles and what-not & you can decide for yourself:

1) THE HISTORICAL ARTICLE:

This is perhaps the easiest one to write - the most common one -- and the one most hat-ed if not done right. Most often, the hist-orical article os little more than a review of comics; an article that could be written by anyone who had read the comics in question and certainly useless to anyone who had read them. (there is hardly anything more pathetic than somebody's plot summaries of of recent comics). For the benefit of we, who have to read your literary offerings, stay away from strictly plot-summary, even when you speak of older comics. Sea Tom Fagan's "Super-Snipe" article in FANDOM ANNUAL # 1 for a good example of a well-done historical article.

2) THE FACTUAL ARTICLE:

There is certainly nothing wrong with a good, informative factual article, but the writer should make sure his information is not already common knowledge, and then check, and re-check the accuracy of what he presents as established fact. Opinion must always be clearly represented as opinions, and not as truths.

The Factual article is usually the one that deals with Convention Reports, Editorial changes at certain companies, or other topics that require straight reporting.

3) THE OPINION ARTICLE:

This little number, if handled properly can be the highligh of any fanzine. Mark Lv-anier is one of the more well known opinion writers, and more than once, his "Graphic Traffic" column has been the only worthwhile, feature of the fanzine in which it apeared..!

In basic terms, the opinion article is a writing-down of the writers thoughts on a selected subject. What could be easier? Every-body has opinions.

That's just the problem. It's not enough to merely state one's opinions as in the statement: "I think Jack Kirby stinks!" --One has to explain why he thinks Kirby stinks, or it's simply his opinion against anyone elses.

When well-done, the controverisal, yet thoughtful, opinion article will attract more attention than any other feature, and writing such articles has made more than a few big fan names.

4) THE ANALYTICAL ARTICLE:

This type is a cross between the fact-ual and the opinion articles, and is much less common , possibly because it's harder to write. The writer goes beneath the surface when working on an analytical article, and probes deeply into the motivations and implications of his subject. One of the best ex-amples of this one might be Greg Kishel's THE X-MEN: AN X-ERCISE IN IMPROBABILITY? in Mar-vel Mirror # 8, which re-interpreted the concept of the X-Men in the light of the Darwinian theory and Nietzschean philosophy.

The Analytical Article is one of my per-sonal favorites, but I've only seen a very few of them (and of those I saw, I wrote several of them myself). Perhaps no one is inter-ested...either in reading or writing Analy-tical Articles. A shame, really.

5) THE FAN SATIRE:

Next is the perennial favorite. The goofy spoof. There are two types of satire :: the "Mad" type satire, and the fan satire.

The "Mad" satire is the one which some prominent comic strip or TV show or movie, or anything else is lampooned to death in either

text or strip form. Few of these have been remotely funny, most concentrating instead upon savagely attacking and totally destory - ing their targets. A case of too little humor and too much hatred. The best satires have probably been the more restrained, subtle, less heavy handed ones.

The fan satire is second generation ::: There had to be a fandom in the first place for it to be able to lampoon itself. Fan-sat- ires are satires on fans themselves, & have been around since the earliest days of Sci -- ence Fiction Fandom. Recent examples of Fan- Satires include Tony Isabella's C.O.N.C.U.S.- S.I.O.N. AGENTS, in some fanzine whose title I forget and his "Interview with the Yerrow Craw", in Marvel Mirrir # 11. Greg Kishel's & my "The Marvelmen" in MM # 10, half the mat - erial in Mark Riley's SUPERZINE, and even an entire fanzine, Barry Siegels THE FARCE OF FANDOM.

If writing a Fan satire remember the libel laws and that enemies are easily made!! Please remember that the classic Isabella formula of making a fanzine's staff secret a- gents of a group whose name's initials spell out the fanzine's name, giving the agents a wierd menace to fight or problem to solve, & then turning them loose without a plot, but with plenty of bad jokes, is PITIFULLY OVER - USED.

6) FAN FICTION:

Unfortunately, Fan Fiction can be com- pared to pro fiction, and fan fiction usually comes out pretty bad in the comparison. Of course, some pro SF Writers started out in SF Fandom, which means, Fandom can be a good training ground; it also means that some Fan Fiction writers can use a lot more training.

My advice? When writing fiction, write the best you can. Avoid cliches, use believ - able characterization and dialogue...but if one does not already know that, he has no buisness writing fiction.

Not many Comic Fanzines publish any great amount of text SF - fiction, possibly, because much of it is badly written & cliche ridden. A few Fanzines do handle it, such as Mark Isaac's A THOUSAND WORLDS and Dennis D. Conger's FANTASY WORLD, and others will pub - lish one or two texts an issue. When a more general fanzine prints a text-story, however - it usually gets a bad reaction from some read- ers, who scribble indignantly "I Hate Text Stories."

Text Super Hero stories are even more un -popular because most writers seem unable to get away from even the most banal Super Hero - cliches. Also, the Super Hero story, being bet -ter fitted for a visual format, is ill-suited to mere type. A Super Hero demands action, not words.

7) THE AMA - STRIP:

Who hasn't created one's own characters, and started out with imitation comic strips? I remember one of my own, of about fourth grade or so, when I was hung on both Donald Duck and Spider-Man. Thesis + Antithesis = Synthesis!!! The result was SuperDuck (and I was definitely most pleased when a few weeks later I saw a funny-animal comics strip at the Supermarket ((Of Couse!!)) with the very title -- SUPER -- DUCK (Archie Radio put this one out, didn't they?)). I was so pleased I tried to tell a nearby stock boy all about it, but he didn't seem interested). I wish I had saved my Super- Duck strips - they might have made pretty fun- ny reading after nearly ten years.

Some amatuer comic strips appearing in Fanzines are well done. Two of my favorites are John MacKay's "Vault-Or" in Dan Vanden Eyn -den's "Emperial Comics" and Wendy Fletcher's, "The Rebels", of the now defunct "Fandom Onium and in her "Kapa - Alpha" work. And, of course many strips are atrocious. I like to think a- bout pleasant things and in keeping with that policy, I won't mention any bad examples.

In addition to considerations of art and story quality, another factor is type of re - production. Mimeograph stencils are next to im -possible to draw upon directly, and results are generally terrible. Spot illo's can be

specially electro stencilled from inked drawings onto stencils, but not only is this expensive, but art tends to come out slightly fuzzy and ill-defined. I have not seen any strips that were entirely electro - stencilled, probably because printers expenses are so high, one might as well go offset,anyway,forget mimeo.

Ditto is good for strips, as it's cheap - easy to draw on, and comes in five lucious colors. Then, too, there's everybody's favorite, Photo Offset, well known for all its whizbang clarity, prestige and expence.

All the budding strip writer needs, if he can't himself drawm is an artist friend, & he's all set to collaborate on an amatuer comic strip. Certainly his efforts can't be any worse than some strips that have appeared.

- -

You have finished your literary masterwork -- what do you do now?

You find a likely fanzine and send your work to the editor, enclosing return postage if you want your work returned. The worst the editor can do is reject your submission and send it back, in which case you can send it to some other editor, re-write it, or junk it and start another article.(I won't do any of those, if Gary rejects this article, though I'll cry a lot)!

In sending work out, analyze fanzines carefully and see what kind of thing each one wants. You wouldn't, for example, send a four-teen page, ditto comic strip to six - page, offset Marvel Mirror, for example, or a serious intellectual analytical to Farce Of Fandom (if you did, Barry Siegel and Bruce Simon might make a dirty 10 page comic strip out of it, then sign your name to it.)!

Your work is accepted? What do you get for it? Fanzine editor's are poor (at least this one is), and cannot afford to pay contributors in cash. A tradition has grown up that writers and artists work for free, and older fans frown on anyone who demands money for fan work. The standard payment for fanwork is a free copy of the issue in which one's work appears in, and some fanzines also give free ad space. What really counts is the thrill of seeing one's name in print, not the one of seeing it on a check.

Something like ten different fans (out of some 3,000) must do half the written work appearing in fanzines. Why don't the other 2,990 fans do something once in awhile? Fanzine editors are DESPERATE for articles (they must be: they're asking me to do work for them)!!! The field is wide open for good new writers..

BUT WHERE ARE THEY?
THEY'RE PROBABLY READING THIS FANZINE.

DWIGHT DECKER

THE SEARCH

by Robert Kowalski

CHAPTER "IV"

When his twin brother is reported killed in an auto accident, it is learned that

When his twin brother is reported killed in an auto accident, and it is learned that the car had been tampered with, Dr. David Bryant becomes the billy club wielding her-o known as CRIMESMASHER to carry on where the police investigation left off. That was in 1966. The Search for his brothers killers, is still the motivating force behing his campaign to smash crime wherever and whenever he finds it! It has led him to team up with THE MASK and together they now follow the trail of their prime suspect: the mysterious leader of an underworld organization known to his men only as CRIMEMASTER!

THE TIME: 1968
THE PLACE: Police Headquarters
THE EVENT: A meeting between Dr. David Bryant and the two hoods who almost wrote "finis" to his career.

In a cell, in which his would-be kill-ers are held pending an investigation, Doctor Bryant listens as they explain the reason for the attack.

"I'd like to make one thing clear, Bryant. We weren't out to KILL YOU. We thought you were Jim Bryant. You do look a lot like 'em, 'ya know. You even have the same last name."

"Yes, I can understand that. Jim was my twin brother. But, why would you want to kill him? He was only a two-bit hood, certainly not in CRIMEMASTER's league."

"I don't know his reason's, but CRIME-MASTER hired us to exterminate you as soon as he heard that a man answering James Bryant's description had been seen in Centerline. We thought it was funny, since Bryant was supp-osed to have been killed a few years back in an auto accident, but we searched your room anyway. When we found clippings about the accident hidden in a drawer, we'd figured you'd kept 'em around as a joke. It isn't every man who can carry his own obituary around with 'em. We didn't even think you might be a relative keeping those clippings for sentimental reasons. Honest, it's the truth."

"I believe you. The fact that James Bry-ant was my brother wasn't generally known!! CRIMEMASTER probably thought that his prev-ious murder attempt had failed, and tried a-gain. If you'll turn states evidence,I'm sure the law will go easier on you.

Our scene switches to a cave in the hills outside of town, where THE MASK has uncovered a hidden cache of weapons secreted there by order of CRIMEMASTER for a purpose as yet unkown to the cowled mystery analyst!! As he examines one of the high powered rifles from an open crate on the floor in front of him, he is detracted just long enough for a guard making his rounds of the hideout to get the drop on him.

"Drop it, masked man. Hands over your head. I'll take that .38 of yours, too."

"THE MASK"

Specially Rendered illo For THE SEARCH by Al Grinage

Reaching into THE MASK's coat, the hood removes the gun from its shoulder holster...! Binding the crimefighter securely, he races off to radio in his report.

No sooner is his captor out of sight than THE MASK goes to work on his bonds. Snap-ping his wrist activates a spring mechanism on his right arm, ejecting a stiletto into his grip. It is only a matter of moments before he is free of his bonds. Replacing the dagger, he moves off down a connecting tunnel in the same direction as his foe. Coming to an opening, he recognizes the static sound of a radio being tuned. Reaching to the back of his belt, THE MASK removes a throwing knife from its holster and hefts it.

"It's a good thing he didn't search for me or I'd never have gotten this far. I've only used my gun fighting CRIMEMASTER's goons so they don't expect me to have any other con-cealed weapons. They'll live to regret that oversight before I'm through here."

A deft throw sends the knife hurtling into the controls, short-circuiting the de-vice before a warning can be sent. A flying leap and the captor has become the captive. A quick series of questions yields these answ-ers:

"The arms are stored here and at other locations till the day CRIMEMASTER feels we are strong enough to take control of the city by open attack. Until then, we'll continue our underground activities.

"I didn't shoot you on sight because I figured if I could hand you over to CRIMEMAS-TER alive, it would be worth more to o u r cause."

I was trying to reach my radio contact with the news of your capture. He would have forwarded the message to CRIMEMASTER."

After recovering his gun, THE MASK turn-s his charge over to the law and reports the location of the weapons cache. He then heads for Carter House and his daily meeting with Dr. David (CRIMESMASHER) Bryant. In his civ-ilian identity, James Peters, THE MASK,is the owner of Carter House.

"So, the attack on you was just a case of mistaken identity?"

"Yes, but I find your information highly interesting. An arms build-up for eventual takeover of Centerline is something we'd bet-ter look into. It'll be risky, but with a con-tract out on us already, there's not much else that can happen."

"I suppose you're right. CRIMEMASTER seems to be extending his field of influence beyond the city limits, judging from the lo-cation of the weapons cache. We'll have to redouble our efforts in order to keep him in check. I'm beginning to think it's too big a job for two men."

"You should have thought of that before signing on for the duration. We've come too far to quit now. If Centerline falls, Empire City may be next. After that, who knows how far CRIMEMASTER will try to go. It'd be World War II all over again, with the teams being Law & Order vs. CRIMEMASTER's Underworld....!

"CRIME-SMASHER"

BY AL GRINAGE

ILLustrations For THE SEARCH Prepared By Al Grinage From Sketches By Richard Kowalski

There's no turning back now. It's them or us!"

Grim words from a grim man. Pessimistic or prophetic? Only time will tell.

CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE...

Pat Janson —— A Psychological Analysis ——

An Apparation Of -- An Angel

Who are we to speculate -- to judge the conundrum of the unkown? What is real and what is unreal? What is right and what is wrong?Who are we to scathe at another's beliefs ---- his imagination -- his inner thoughts -- or perhap -s, perhaps even at his own concience? Who are we to say that Stan Lee's imaginary creation is actually an incorrect image of ... HIM?

Of all the fictional manifistations which romp through the page of "graphic stories", of these uncountable hoards, only one has had such a dramatic, controversial impact upon the com -ics industry as no character has ever managed before. This creation, perhaps, portrays, the fictional (imaginary duplicate)omnipotence that writers have been striving for, better than any form of quasireligous being introduced through any art form and media.

He is, as Stan puts it, a "saintly,almost Christ-like" adaptation. And he is indeed, an adaptation. For this "angelic image" of the com -ics pages is adapted from our own souls,indeed our own beliefs -- dwarfted in a likeness of our creator, that is, in fact, so seemingly pre -cise that it is almost beyond belief.

Neither is he human, nor is he alien; but a dual image. A dual image of man, and one of the Supreme. In fact, the Silver Surfer is, per -haps, the most congruent likeness ever attain-ed through man's vast imagination.

Bestowed upon him are unnumerable powers -- powers beyond the relm of man. Such powers fair to make him indestructable and nearly all-powerful, as they are of the cosmos themselves. They are his alone to command. Wisdom and pat -ients are his staunchest virtues; his courage is not lacking. The Surfer's appearance is that of supremeness -- a glistening body, not yet not ever to be, marred by temptation, by evil -- never to be touched by damnation.

Again, neither human nor truly alien; a vast, interminable being; part of the universe, yet the universe itself. Stranded upon a mean -ingless, mad microcosm which is adrift in the void of many great galaxies. Set to many suff -erings for one fault; a fault so non-imaginary, that it stuns the senses; a fault which is ac -tually far from being a fault. The act of kind-ness -- of saving a world, of saving mankind..! Indeed, the fault was that of the cold, non -- caring Galactus. Indeed, the punishment doomed him to an existence in HELL! Indeed, the fault was the proverbial "blessing-in-disguise". But it was a fault.

However, foolish, blind mankind betrays him. The Silver Surfer is tomented for he is not understood, but neither is he given the chance to be so. Upon one such tormenting occasion, the Surfer repelled in the only man -ner he could -- with his heart.

"We must forgive them! For in all the universe, only an insane humanity kills in the name of justice!"

A humanistic heart with, perhaps a non-humanistic, more understanding soul.

This is the SILVER SURFER. This is the brilliance of one man -- one man. Yet, al -- though he is but one, he dreams, he prays.

INDEED HE IS HOPE...

A JAY MIKE ART PORTFOLIO

We, the staff of the FANTASTIC FANZINE are very proud of our very first art portfolio featured in any issue of the FF:

JAY MIKE is a relatively new addition to "Fandom's Ranks". The near "double page spread" to the right is a fantastic illustration of BAY WOLF & GRENDEL.

We are sorry, but space is at a premium, and to do justice to Jay's superb draftsman -- ship and mastery of technique, we are presenting them one to a page. Therefore it will take at least two issues to run the entire art port -folio.

Also, you may look forward to an inter - view with Jay in a future issue.

---The F.F. staff

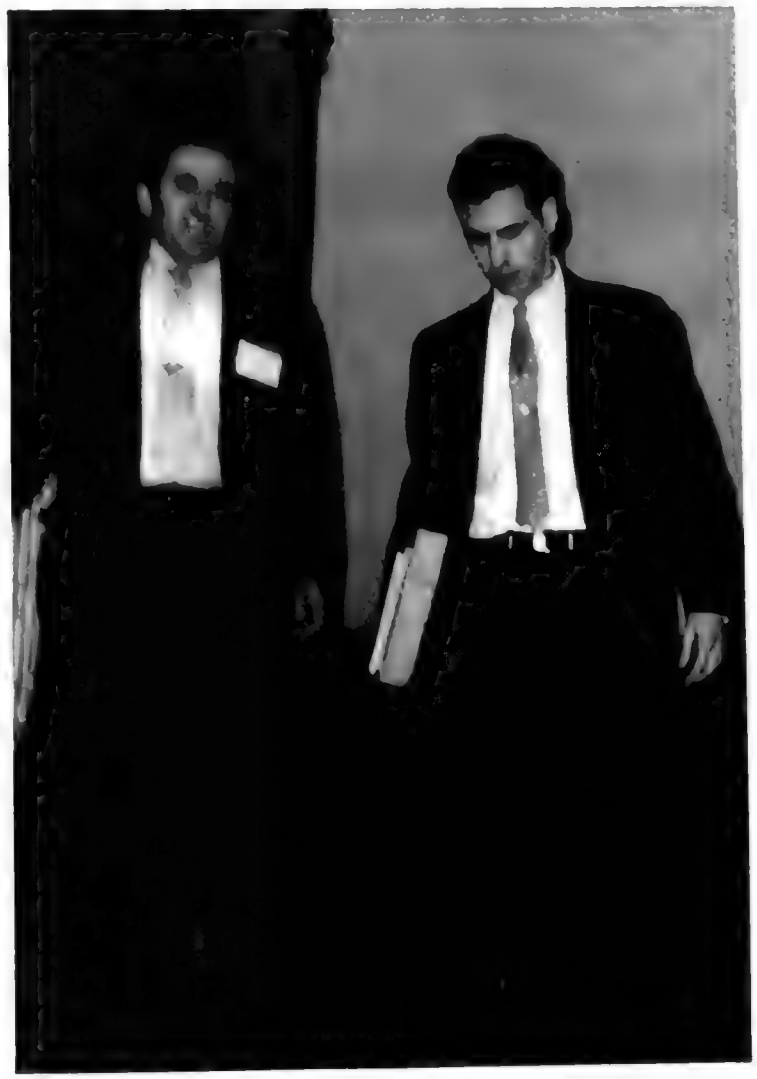
"A Report On..."

First of all, I'd like to apologize for not printing this article with the photo's of the convention in the last issue, but as I explained in issue 10, after lay - ing the issue out, I didn't have the room needed for this article. Things like that won't happen again, and next years con re - port will be printed in the very next issue that comes out after the convention.

THE 1969 COMIC ART CONVENTION (also called, THE SCARP CON) was held at the STAT -LER HILTON HOTEL, in NEW YORK CITY, July 4th, 5th & 6th. All photo's of the con were taken by editor Groth, so you can address all complaints about fuzzy pictures to me!!

The Convention opened to all fans on FRIDAY, JULY FOURTH at 9:00 A.M. During the first few hours of the con, you could walk around in the dealers room, purchasing old and rare comics, new comics, original art- work or fanzines and/or stroll around the exhibit room, and admire the beautiful dis- plays.

The first days exhibits included a huge JOHN FANTUCHIO exhibit, which repre - sented much of the work John did for fandom last year. John's exhibit took up one en - tire wall, and one long table adjacent to the wall. Next to the FANTUCCHIO EXHIBIT was a long table displaying several 8½" x11" pages of VAUGHN BODE'S work. It was in com- ic strip form, and the story about robots



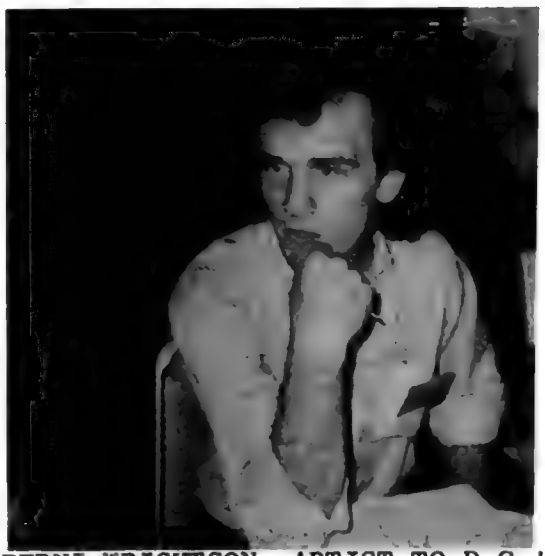
LEFT: DICK GIORDANO - RIGHT: AL WILLIAMSON

The 1969 Comic Art

"NEAL ADAMS SKETCHING DRAWINGS FOR THE FANS"

MURPHY ANDERSON // D.C. ARTIST

FRANK FRAZETTA WITH HIS "BEST ARTIST TROPHY, SIGNING AUTOGRAPHS"

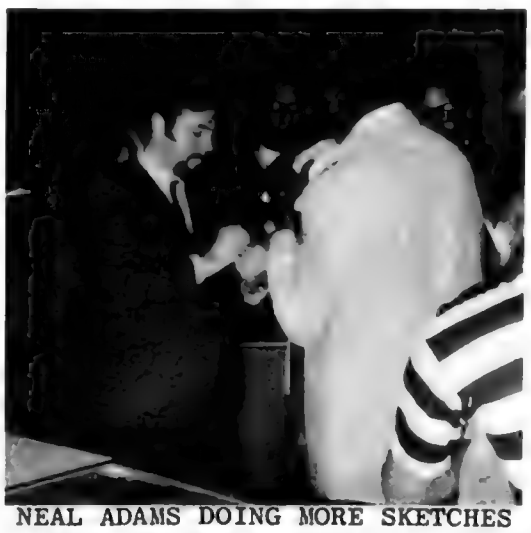


BERNI WRIGHTSON, ARTIST TO D.C.'s NEW S&S STRIP, NIGHTMASTER.

JOE SINNOTT

Convention by Gary Groth, Editor

"STERANKO EXHIBIT (PAINTINGS), TAKEN FROM HIS PORTFOLIO"



NEAL ADAMS DOING MORE SKETCHES

JOHN BUSCEMA JUST LEAVING

ROY THOMAS SIGNING AUTOGRAPHS

TAKEN AT THE BANQUET LUNCHEON; JULY 5th, 1969. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: GIL KANE, HAL FOSTER & Convention sponsor, PHIL SUELING.

demolishing a city. The last wall housed some amatuer work (some pretty bad). Other displays by Gray Morrow and Martin Greim, all in full color were placed in the middle of the exhibit area.

At 12:00 Noon, GIL KANE gave his Keynote Speech to an audience of about 50 - 70 fans. Kane discussed the comic book, as a graphic medium. He discussed their past, present, and their future. "The comic book -Super Hero needs a shot-in-the-arm if it's to stay alive" says Kane; Kane went on,"The comic book industry needs a new outlook. I have tried to help the field with "My name is Savage". People like Jim Steranko & Neal Adams have tried. But, still the Super Hero will probably fade out altogether in the 70's, and follow with Horror, Swords & Sorcery and that type of thing". Kane seems to think the Super Hero is totally washed up. His speech lasted for about an hour and a half, and was followed with a long question and answer period, with the audience.

"Economics & Comics" followed soon af -ter Kanes Keynote Speech. This was a panel discussing the economics of the comic book. Moderator was Dick Giordano, a National Editor. Giordano had able assists from Roy Thomas, and Warren publishing company's Jim Warren. (Warren is the publisher of Creepy, Eerie, and the new Vampirella. Many of these titles contain covers by Frank Fra -- zetta and Jim Steranko, and interior strips by John Fantucchio, Neal Adams, Sal Trapani and many more. Buy them, if you haven't already done so. The would be found in magazine section of your favorite drug store --NOT the comic section!) Giordano spent little time on the speech part of the pan - el; the main part of the discussion was a long, very long question & answer period with the audience. One very interesting question was brought up to Giordano: "Exactly how much monatary support does fandom have? I mean, could fandom keep a good mag with poor selling rates from being dropped?" Giordano answered, "If every single person in fandom bought 10 copies of every single comic book on the stands, we'd go out of bus -iness tomorrow". And Warren added, "We'd go out of business that night!" This means that Fandom, alone, couldn't keep the comic book industry in business! Maybe, we'd better start appreciating the bubble gum brigade -- that keeps our hobby in business!

It seems that comic book publishers aren't out to please the serious comic book fan; Just To Make Money! Both Kane & Gior -- dano said this in their panel discussions..! People like Kane, Giordano, Thomas, Steranko Adams, Lee, and many others who have shaped the comic book industry as it is today, are trying to break away from the iron hand of their publishers; trying to bring more sophisticated stories to us; but the publisher is still the dominating force in the indus - try!

As I reported last issue, Roy Thomas stated that Not Brand Echh was dropped be - cause of poor selling rates, and not because of the well known excuse, "Stan was tiring of it." Thomas let out some more scoops:::: Nick Fury, Agent of SHIELD wasn't selling well, even with Steranko on the book. That's really hard to believe. Also, he said, that the Inhumans will probably never get their own mag; "Spiderman sold better when Romita took over the book", answered Thomas to an inquiring fan, "but it could have just been the time; the mag might have sold just as well, even if Ditko stayed on the book ---- nobody knows."

The next social meeting was "Lecture: The Beginnings" moderated by Vin Sullivan! I

LEFT: FRANK FRAZETTA - RIGHT: BILL PARENTE

missed this panel, because I had a number of other, important things to do. In the time of this lecture, I set up a table to sell FF numbers 6*7 and 8*9, got some pro sketches & autographs, snapped photo's and met old acc-aintences. I sold over 10 dollars worth of FF's that day, and stopped selling when Auc-tion I began.

AUCTION I began at 8:30 P.M. and was one of the highlights of the convention for me. At this first auction, I purchased a pen -cilled drawing of TALON THE TIMELESS, by JIM STERANKO. The auction lasted nearly an hour and fans bought everything from comic book grab bags to original Steranko artwork. (What?) After the auction, (if you were still on your feet), you could stroll around the dealers tables, and admire the exhibits. 11:00 P.M. drew a close to the first days activities.

Attending pro's the first day were:Gil Kane, Jim Warren, Murphy Anderson, Roy (and Jean) Thomas, John Verporten, Rich Buckler, John (and Mary) Fantucchio, Dick Giordano, Berni Wrightson and Gray Morrow.

The nest day, Saturday, July 5th, reg-istration, exhibits and the dealers room opened at 9:00 A.M. The Banquet Lunchoen --- started at 1:00 P.M., so from 9 to 1, I just strolled around, meeting old friends,selling copies of FF and talking with the pro's.

Due to a slight mix-up as to where the Luncheon would be held, I was a little late. I attended the Luncheon with my father and Bill Wilson (editor of The Collector). Due to our party being late, we had to split up: my father to one tabel, and Bill and I to another. Sceduled guests of honor at the lun -cheon were HAL FOSTER and HARVEY KURTZMAN Kurtzman couldn't make it, so AL WILLIAMSON received his award in his place. Following a most enjoyable luncheon, was a long question and answer period with HAL FOSTER, with Gil Kane as moderator.

The activity following the Luncheon was Rich Hauser's panel, "The E.C. Era". --- Somehow or other, I managed to miss it alto-gether. It must have been interesting, tho, as Hauser's a real authority on the EC era!! I could have leanred quite a bit from it.

Following the Panel, was a four chap - ter serial film, entitled "CAPTAIN CELLULOID" I had no interest in this, and got terribly bored with it, after just a few minutes of my watching it. The film lasted from 5:30 P. M. to 7:00 P.M. During this time, the STER - ANKO EXHIBIT was set up (see photo page).The exhibit contained 7 paintings by STERANKO. Each painting was beautiful, as you can see from the photo's of them. (NOTE: The 3 pic-tures printed herein from the Steranko Ex -- hibit are printed with the permission of Jim Steranko.)

At 8:00 P.M. (to 9:00 P.M.) came the costume parade and awards. This was held in the meeting room. Each 'contestant' received a free color snap shot of them in full cos - tume. Costumes included: Two Spectre's, Won-der Wart Hog, Iron Man, Dr. Strange,Two For-bush Men, The Man In Black, Black Canary and Mickey Mouse, The Priest & Priestess, Hawk - man, and The Red Skull. First prize was award -ed to The Man in Black; Wonder Wart Hog took second prize, and I believe Dr. Strange got third. Prizes were some very rare comic art, and original strips. Some strips includ -ed HOGARTHS TARZAN, and Ditko's Hawk & Dove and Creeper. Judges were Jim Steranko, Jean Thomas, and Al Williamson. All decisions as to the winners were unanimous.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 37

FANTUCCHIO EXHIBIT ON THE TABLE; STERANKO EXHIBIT AGAINST THE WALL

The Present State Of Marvels Villians

DOUG MARTIN

There has been much talk lately to the effect that Marvel is declining in quality.

There has been just as much said to the effect that this is not so, and some go so far as to say that Marvel is better than ever. One of the main arguments used by the "Marvel is getting worse" supporters is that most of the recent Marvel mags are all getting to be the same, that all their titles are alike, with the same plot, the same character hang - up etc. This may be true to some degree, but I don't think this is really the main prob - lem. One large problem that may give the stor -ies the impression of being alike is that Marvel's villians are rapidly declining... in quality & originality!

I don't think I can stress enough, the importance of good villians to the Super-Hero story. To be interesting, a super being must confront foes powerful enough to give him a challenge, intelligent enough to devise new challenges in later confrontations, & bizzare enough to appeal to the readers sense of fan- tasy. A quick check of some of the most fam - ous heroes shows that they had equally fam - ous villians: Batman had Joker, Catwoman, Two Face, Penquin, Riddler; Superman had Luthor, Prankster, Toyman; Captain Marvel had Sivana and Mr. Mind; Captain America had Red Skull!! All these, as well as all the other G.A. her- oes had lesser villians. The evil menace as much a part of the 60's as the hero was, & in the early part of the 60's, Marvel villians in my opinion, ran a close second behind D.C. (and this is pretty good since DC had such greats' as SINESTRO, GRODDD, SHADOW THEIF.... etc.)! Now, Marvel's villians have fallen, & I will try to analyze the reason for this de -cline in quality here:!!:

Comic Book Bad-Guys may be placed in these four catagories:

(1) NEW VILLIANS:These can be anything new, but for our purposes they will be the type found in the Golden Age and mainly in the early 60's.

(2) OLD VILLIANS: Any of the previous type appearing for anything other than the first time.

(3) GROUPS:Usually Spy organizations, and not including a group of new or old villians that are unlike each oth- er, such as The Masters Of Evil.

(4) MISCELLANEOUS: In- cluding Robots, Androids, unintelligent mon- sters, and human strongmen, as well as gener- al "big guy" types. It is the frequency of the usage of robots that is causing such a problem.

Let's look at one of the greatest vill- ians ever - DR. DOOM. He was certainly power- ful enough, and managed to dream up different ways to challenge the F.F. each time, and he was bizzare in his suit of armor, his myster- ious mask, and his old crusty castles!! The The same is true of the early SUB-MARINER,DR. OCTUPUS, and SANDMAN. Unfortunately,this type of villian has been disappearing slowly from the Marvel scene, having been replaced by automation. As in the case of many other occ- upations, the job of being a Marvel villian is now being taken over by machines. Dr. Doom has been replaced by the Manslayer, and Dr. Octupus has been left in favor of MAN MOUNT - AIN MARCO and the RHINO

A quick check of the past two years yields the following information: (This sur- vey was taken from issues dated Nov. 1967 to Nov. 1969): The breakdown of villians is: 87 old villians, 59 robots, 48 new villians, & 8 groups. This means that about 30% of Marv- el's villians are Robots or Musclemen!! In reality, the figure is higher, because the robot almost always appears in the same story as an old villian, and the menace is just there for show. A perfect example of this is the recent encounter between the Fantastic 4 and Dr. Doom. In making the count, I marked down both an old villian and a robot,but the robots were the real villians, and most of the FF never laid eyes on Dooms person. (An-- other prime example is the Puppet Master-ed.) So the ratio of robots to others is around 41:59, Or around half.

Well, what's wrong with robots,you say? And what does this have to do with Marvel's current stories seeming the same? Well, re - member what I said a good villian had to have? The only thing a robot is, is bizzare and fan -tastic, and after they appear as much as they have now, they seem rather ordinary.Some are powerful, but more often the hero has to "fight down" to them to create interest ----- which creates nothing but a lack of interest! Robots devise no traps like DOOM once did. They all come in swinging, and when 41% of the stories of a comic line consists only of an uninteresting fight, the stories do tend to seem somewhat alike.

I think most fans would agree that Mar- vel's worst mag is Captain Marvel. (This was written before the NEW Captain Marvel emerged from Kane and Thomas -ed.). 7 of his 13 vill- ians were either robots or monsters. I would say that HULK is second worst. 8 of his 16 villians were robots. On the other hand, Dr. Strange, Marvel's most improved mag had only 1 robot out of eleven villians; only 8 of 26 Avengers villians was a robot.

What all this shows is that Marvel vil- lians are going down-hill, and that the qual- ity of the magazines are going with them. I'm afraid that one of the reasons for so many villians of this type is that it is easy to use a robot. Since they are all the same, all one has to do is change the appearance a lit- tle, change the color and name, and PRESTO!,a NEW VILLIAN! I only hope that Marvel again will put a little care in the choice of adver -saries for heroes, for once we have a good villian -- half the battle's won!

I again attended the days auction at, 9:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M., and again purchased a full page illustration of TALON THE TIME - LESS by JIM STERANKO. As the auction ended later than scheduled, I retired to my room & missed "PANEL: The Comics Underground".Roger Brand was moderator, and all I got from the couple minutes, I sat in on it, was that he discussed the history and artists that made underground comics famous (infamous?)!

11:00 P.M. drew a close to the second, days activities.

JUST LEAVING THE BANQUET LUNCHEON: HAL FOSTER IN MIDDLE; GIL KANE TO FOSTER'S LEFT.

Attending pro's the second day: Dick Giorano, Al Williamson, Hal Foster, Gil Kane Jim Steranko, Jim Warren, Bill Everett, Neal Adams, John (and Mary) Fantucchio, Roy (and Jean) Thomas, John Verporten and Joe Sinnott

Again, registration, exhibits and the dealers room opened at 9:00 A.M. the third day. At 11:00 A.M., the amatuer art contests arawrds were given out. I can't remember who the winner(s) were, but the judges were Neal Adams, Joe Sinnott and Al Williamson; quite an impressive line-up. The art work ranged from bad to fair to excellent.

At 1:00 P.M., the first activity of the day started: WARREN PUBLISHING COMPANY AWARDS. Guests of honor were Jim Warren and Frank Frazetta. Frazetta was given an enormous "best artist" trophy for his previous work at WARREN PUBLICATIONS.Warren and Frazetta talked about things at Warren public - ations. Following the panel discussion, was a long, (extra long) question and answer per -iod; questions could be directed to Frazetta, Warren or Bill Parente, a writer/editor at Warren. While this panel discussion was going on, The FRAZETTA EXHIBIT was being set up, in the exhibit room. After the Warren Panel, you could stroll out to the exhibit area, and feast your eyes on some eight or ten enormous (I'd say they were about 3' x 4' each;maybe larger) FRAZETTA PAINTINGS! Most were of nude/semi nude girls being threatened or rescued by vikings and barbarians. It was prohibited to photograph this exhibit.

AUCTION III was held at 3:00 P.M. that day. I, again, (yes, again!!) bought a full page of STERANKO'S work; this was the Cap -- tain America cover for issue # 10. This illo was entirely in pencil, when I purchased it, and later, I saw Joe Sinnott again (I had met him the previous day), and asked him if he would like to ink it. Unhesitatingly, he said "YES!". I gave it to him, and he inked it, and mailed it back to mw in just a couple short weeks!

Scheduled after AUCTION III, was The Marvel Bullpen Panel, which, I,unfortunately missed because my father and I had to catch the 'Metroliner' train back to Washington.

7:00 P.M. that night marked the official end of the convention!

Attending pro's the third day: Frank Frazetta, Jim Warren, Jim Steranko, Roy (and Jean) Thomas, Neal Adams, John (and Mary) Fantucchio, Dick Ayers, Gene Colan, Berni Wrightson, Syd Shores, Bill Everett, Joe Sin -nott, Sl Williamson, Archie Goodwin, Sal Trapini, and John Buscema.

Next years SCARP CON will be held at the same time, and I think, the same place! If you have any interest in the graphic art medium and/or the comic book, I'd suggest that you look into attending the next one! Conventions like this are the ultimate meet -ing place for fans and pro's alike. You can talk with your fellow fans, talk with the pro's, and get to know these pro's ---- pro's that make up the backbone of the comic industry. Next years convention will be publisized by FF, a couple months before the convention takes place, to give you ample time to get ready for it.

Since this was my first convention, I wasn't prepared for every eventuality; I know now, what to do and what not to do. I'll write up a more in depth report of the next convention, with some more photo's and 'chit-chat' with the pro's. I'm looking for people who can write on the panels that I won't/can't attend next year; if you're one of those people who could attend the conven -tion, drop me a line.

Who knows...I might be seeing you there next year. (And with a threat like that, nobody'll come!!)

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: NEAL ADAMS, JOE SINNOTT & AL WILLIAMSON, ALL JUDGING AMATUER ART DIS - PLAYS.

Butterfly

the Emperor of Fear part 2

by Gordon Matthews

PROLOGUE to PART II:

As you will recall, last issue, we took a look at some of the finer graphic artists in the field of horror, discussing their stronger and weaker points. This issue, we shall look at some artists who have nothing to do with comics whatsoever. (To talk about anything other than Marvel comics in a Marvel -zine is probably not a very wise move in the first place -- and in discussing something outside of comics altogether is probably real -ly putting my head on the dropping block.But hopefully, none of you readers are of such childish nature to just disregard this art - icle because it discusses pulp artists!! If you are all with us, than we shall proceed..)

A pulp artist must be much more resourceful in his way than a graphic illustrator. While a graphic illustrator has about twenty pages of panels in which to communicate with the reader, the pulp artist must put his idea across in a single picture. A poor pulp art - ist may simply draw an illustration to accompany the story which he is illustrating;that is, one must read the story in order to app - reciate the illustration; whereas the illus - tration of a good pulp artist, while pertaining to the story illustrated, tells its own story even without the text and may be app -- reciated framed by itself on the wall of the museum (one might take not that all pieces of art considered to be masterpieces are in - dependant. Immediately springing to mind is the famous "MONA LISA", in which the viewer is forced to speculate on why the lady is smiling so strangely). And so we see that there is more to pulp artistry than meets the cursory glance.

PART II:

Without a doubt, the best pulp illustrator ever, was Virgil Finlay. Finlay could draw so beautifully there just aren't words! Finlay could draw lines so fine, that you'd swear they were put on by fine-point parmecium cilia.

What's more, he was also a true master of some sort of shading -- CRAFTINT, I believe --- and when Finlay put his mind to it, he could make an illustration look like a photograph! & all of his illustrations were printed full size --unreduced! Now, are there any illustrators around today that can match that? You bet there aren't! Not even Frazetta, in his paintings can make things look more real than Finlay did.

Finlay's horror touch was a gentle, moody one, though he could, if the situation demanded come up with some pretty fierce looking monsters. Still, Finlay wasn't a monster artist. Wether he was really cut out to be a horror artist at all, is a point, I could argue even with myself. I don't know! He could turn out horrifying stuff, if forced to, but he didn't seem to care to. He seemed to prefer to chill without resorting to gue, or not even to horrify at all. This is not a black mark against Finlay... he was just following his own style. He would not have felt so uncomfortable drawing some --thing that he did not care to draw, in this case, monsters. And his drawings would have suffered.

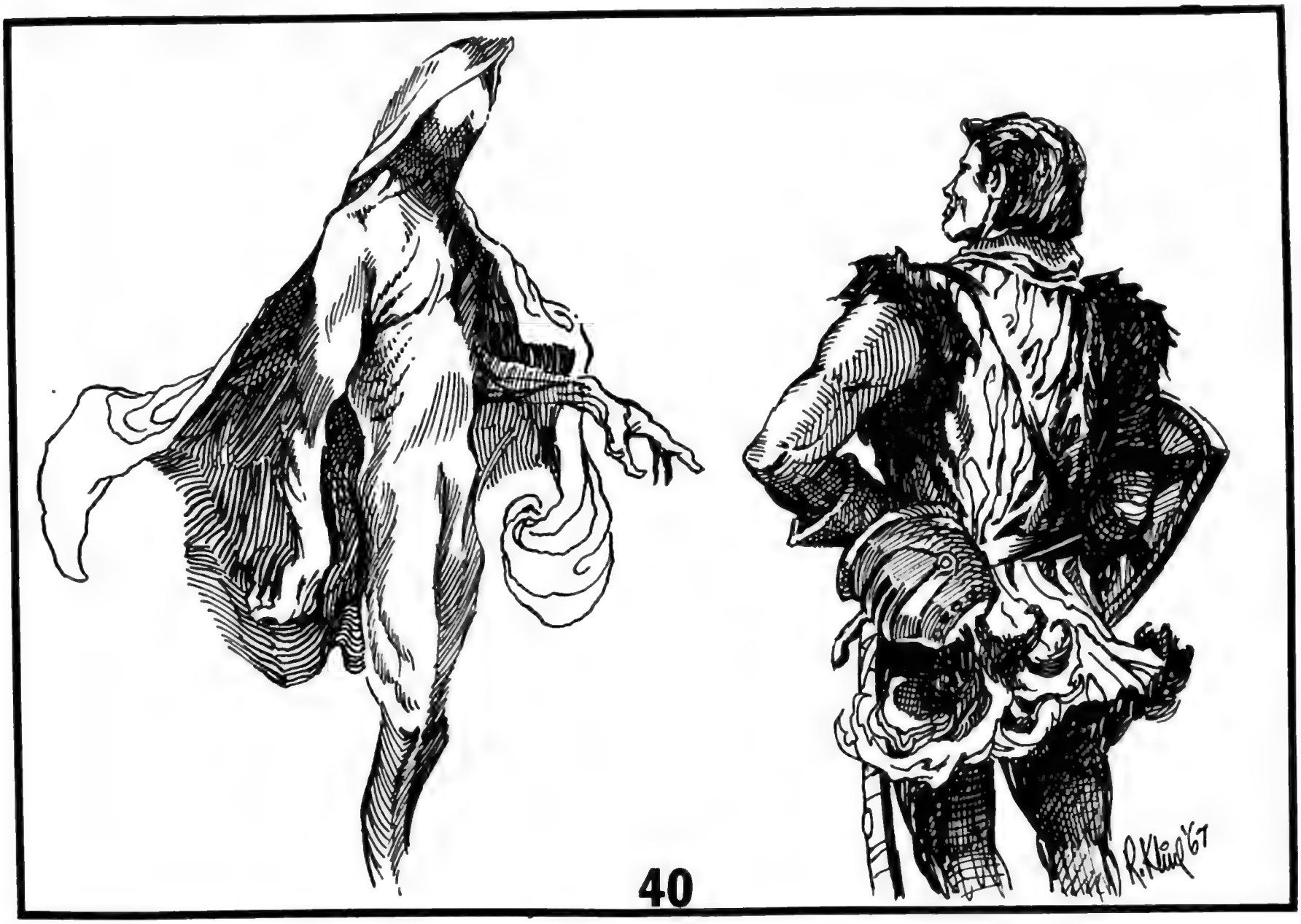
Alright, you say, "what's wrong with Finlay?" "You're the guy who can find fault with Frazetta, so what's the 'however' suprise?"! There isn't one this time. If Finlay has any faults, I've certainly been unable to spot them.

Boris Dolgov was another artist who liked to play around with mood, but his settings were of a different sort. His art produced the effect of a dread something lurking in the mists!! He made a liberal use of Craftint, in fact, some of his art contained no lines of penned or brush ink, just shading. This made for a very wierd affect. Bolgov came up with some really moody, atmospheric pieces.

Dolgov had a scrawly, spidery style of drawing that was beautiful...in a chilling sort of way. Very frail looking. Like a Craftinted Butterfly.(?)Dolgov erred when he used only pen and ink in his drawings. He tried to simulate with pure black ink, the same shadowy quality he was able to create while using craftint, and it just didn't work. It was his imaginitive use of Craftint that made Dolgov a good artist!

Max Fox was an artist with a really fantastic imagination. A mad genuis,perhaps! He was most famous for his demons. And let me tell you, when he drew a demon, it really looked fiendish. Who knows...maybe Fox was a demon, himself!!

Fox's dark imagination was in full swing when he did covers for WIERD TALES. The covers did not necessarily have to relate to any interior story, so Fox could really let himself go with no restrictions from an un -



imaginitive story line. I remember one Fox cover, my favorite Fox, from WIERD TALES for March, 1949 (this issue is not very rare and you could probably pick up a copy for $1.00 - $1.50). It depicted a demon, complete with Bat Wings, Claws, Horns, Spock Ears, Vampire Fangs, Warts, and the most demoniac, sheer evil eyes, you'd ever want to see. This demon is manipulating a Punch & Judy Puppet show & is engineering a knife murder. In the background of the stage is a fairly normal, if somewhat eerie setting, while flaring up behind the demon are the green (?) flames of hell (maybe they're coming through a copper grill!?) The implication is that we humans are just wooden puppets being manipulated by demons...nice thought, huh?

Another memorable Fox Cover appeared again, in WIERD TALES for May, 1948. This one, which looks like an adaption of 'Danse Macabre', depicts a ghostly demoniac (another Fox demon) violinist playing over a graveyard and ghosts dancing to his music.

Although his imagination is undeniable, Matt Fox, unfortunately did not have the sheer artistic talent to support it properly. The violinist was out of proportion! The figures were stiff and lifeless (no puns.... please!) The scenes had no dimension. There was no sense of depth. And this hurt Fox's art greatly.

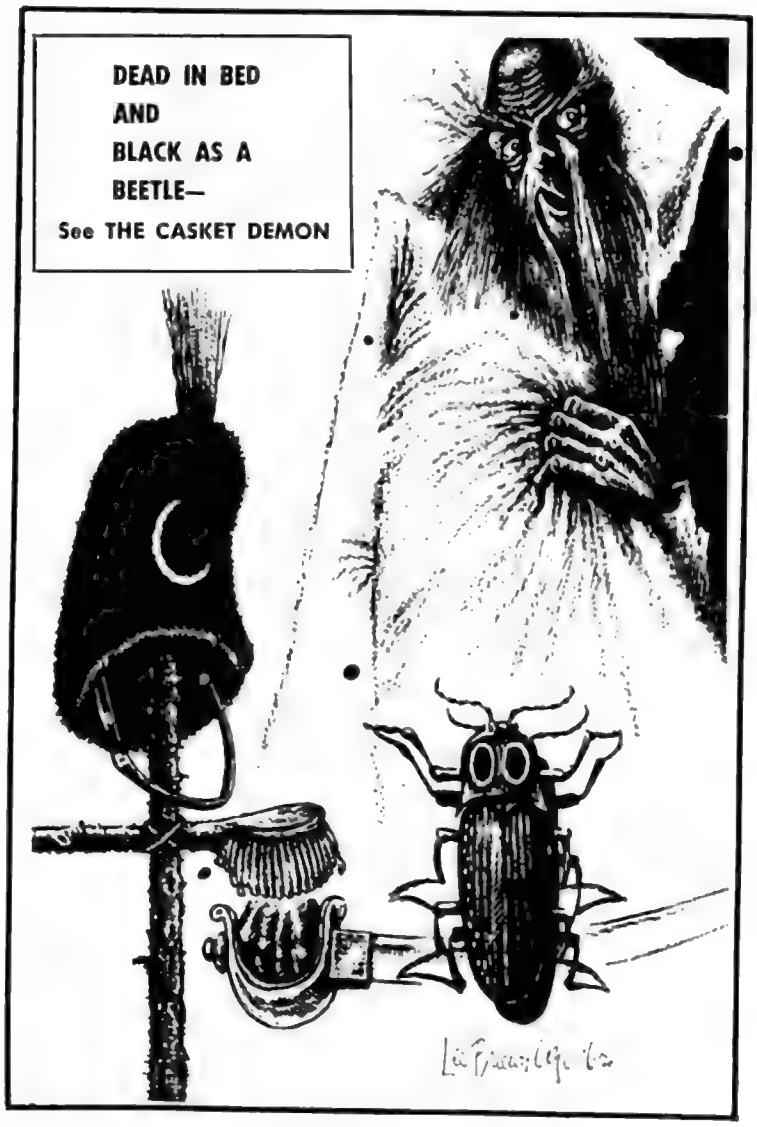
Hannes Box -- Now there was really a wierd artist. His work is some of the most offbeat ever, as anyone who has seen any Box art at all will testify. Hannes Bok's style is one which one either liked or disliked very strongly.

Bok believed in artistic freedom and experimentation, and his work shows it! He didn't conform to the regular, more prosaic forms of pulp illustrating, but created his own unique style.

True, his figures were mal-proportioned more often than not, but nobody cared, because in Bok's unique manner of illustration proportion and muscle structure ment litttle or nothing, while Matt Fox drew in the regular classic style of illustration.

One could not really call Bok's art horror--for that matter, one could call his art little less than offbeat. It was.....Oh Hell! Bok's art simply defies human description, and you'll just have to see some yourself to appreciate it!

I have saved for last, one Lee Brown Coye, the greatest of them all! Coye must have been mentally deranged by reading too many Lovecraft or something, because he is what is known as a real live mad genuis. Coye seems to have somehow managed to capture the pure essence of horror, and put it on paper. His figures are often distorted somewhat cartoonish, as may be noted in the Coye illustration that Gary better print around here somewhere, if he doesn't want to make me look like a fool!!



On the scholarly study side of Coye, he seems to use a scratchboard for illustrating to enable him to produce the look of starting decay in his art. Coye was also one of the 1st pulp artist to start using zip-a-tone,although he used it very sparingly and seldom (One can't really blame him, despite the way FF's artists slap it all over the place, the stuff is darn expensive.)!! On the serious side, zip-a-tone, or for that matter, any brand of shading device, was not suited to Coye!

Coye's trademark, so to speak, consisted of his last initial, a letter, "C" shaped to look like a crescent moon. Coye could sneak it in the wierdest places; a demon's tale,a creatures fangs, a God knows where else. One could have all sorts of fun just studying his art to see where he fitted in his crescent "C"!

I could go on forever about Coye's art - the knobby joints, the scraggly hair, the thick swarthy skin...but I must end this article...(Gary wants something on JIM STERANKO & I'm over the deadline already..!)

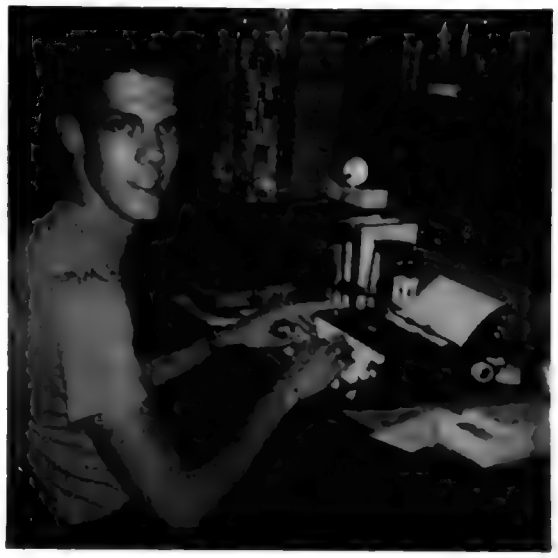
MEET:

THE F.F.'S GROUP OF GREATS!

JOHN G. FANTUCCHIO

Dave Cockrum - "D.E.C."

MIKE O'NEAL



TOM CRAWFORD

AL GRINAGE

EDITOR, GARY GROTH

MORE NEXT ISSUE

ROBERT KLINE, WITH HIS WIFE, MISSIE

Have You Joined The I.O.C.C. Yet??

Well, have you?? If you haven't, then read this ad very carefully!!! The International Organization of Comic Collectors is a very active organization of ALL collectors of comics! Membership for the upcoming year of 1970 is only $1.00. There will be several IOCC news - letters published during 1970 (approx. 6 or 7; possibly more)! Individually bought, these newsletters will cost 25¢ apiece, so you save quite a bit by becoming a years membership..!

Our CAMPAIGN TO REVISE THE COMICS CODE will be 'brought' over to the IOCC Newsletter. The Newsletter will keep you informed about 'up-to-the-minute' news on the Campaign. The first and only IOCC Newsletter of 1969 was published/printed 2 months ago, and costs only 25¢.

IOCC - Newsletter # 1 contained: 8 photo offset pages, with wrap around binding; a two page center spread of the Comics Code in its entirity; a two page article by Gary Groth on what to do to help this Campaign, back cover by Mike O'Neal, a 'Meet Your Fellow Members' page, and Miscellaneous news.

And all of this in just one issue! So, you can imagine what will be in store for you in the next 7 or 8 issues for '70!!! Besides up-to-the-minute news on pro's, fans and the CCA Campaign, Meet Your Fellow Members Page, 'Zine Reviews, Letters to the Editor, articles & top quality artwork, with the close of each year, we'll present our IOCC POLLS, which will be our version of the Alley Awards. But we must have at least 300 members by the end of 1970to hold these Polls. At least send away for the first issue and you can see its potential for yourself. IOCC MEMBERSHIP FOR 1979: $1.50 IOCC NEWSLETTER # 1: Only 25¢

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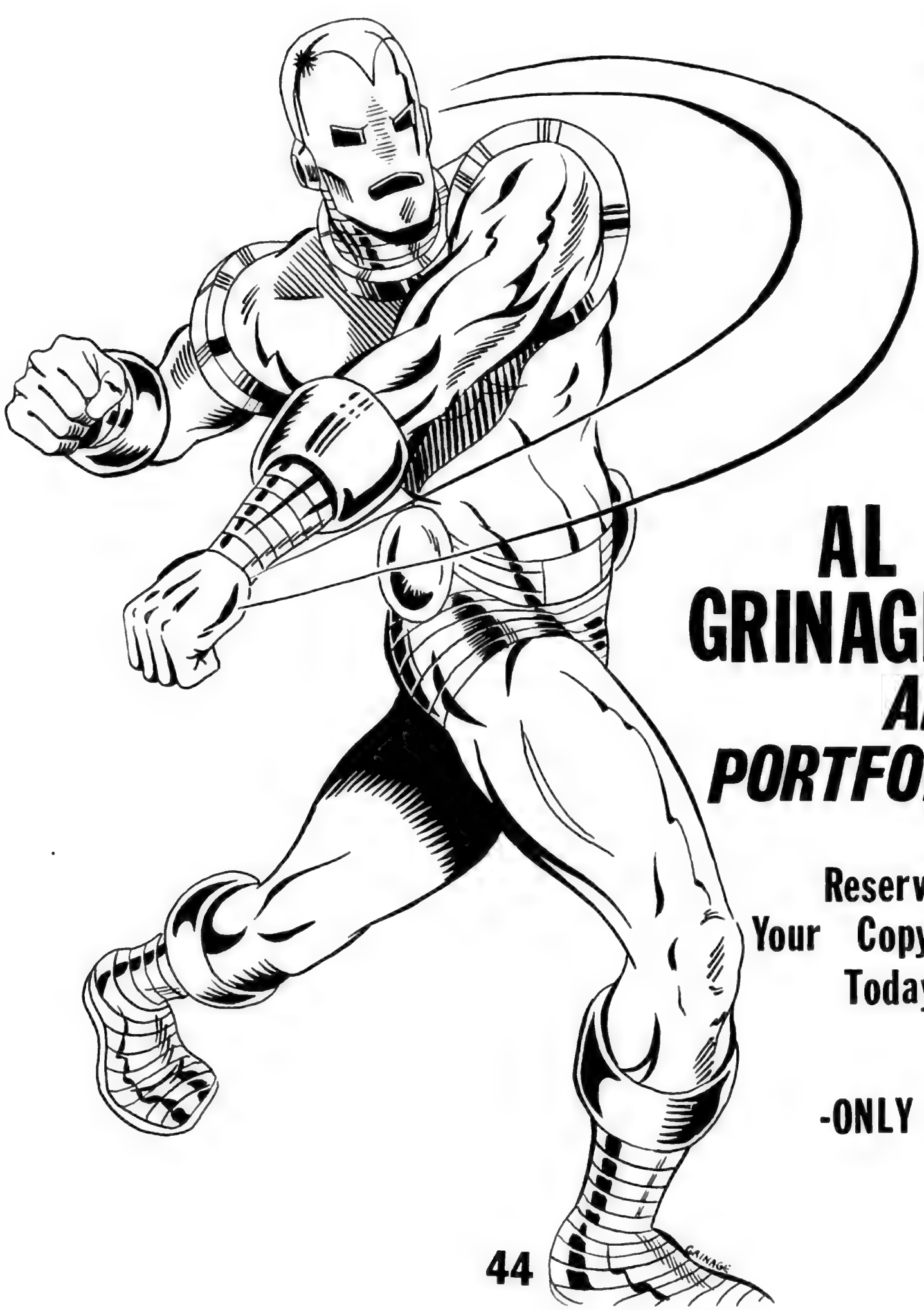
COMING IN Fantastic Fanzine 11...



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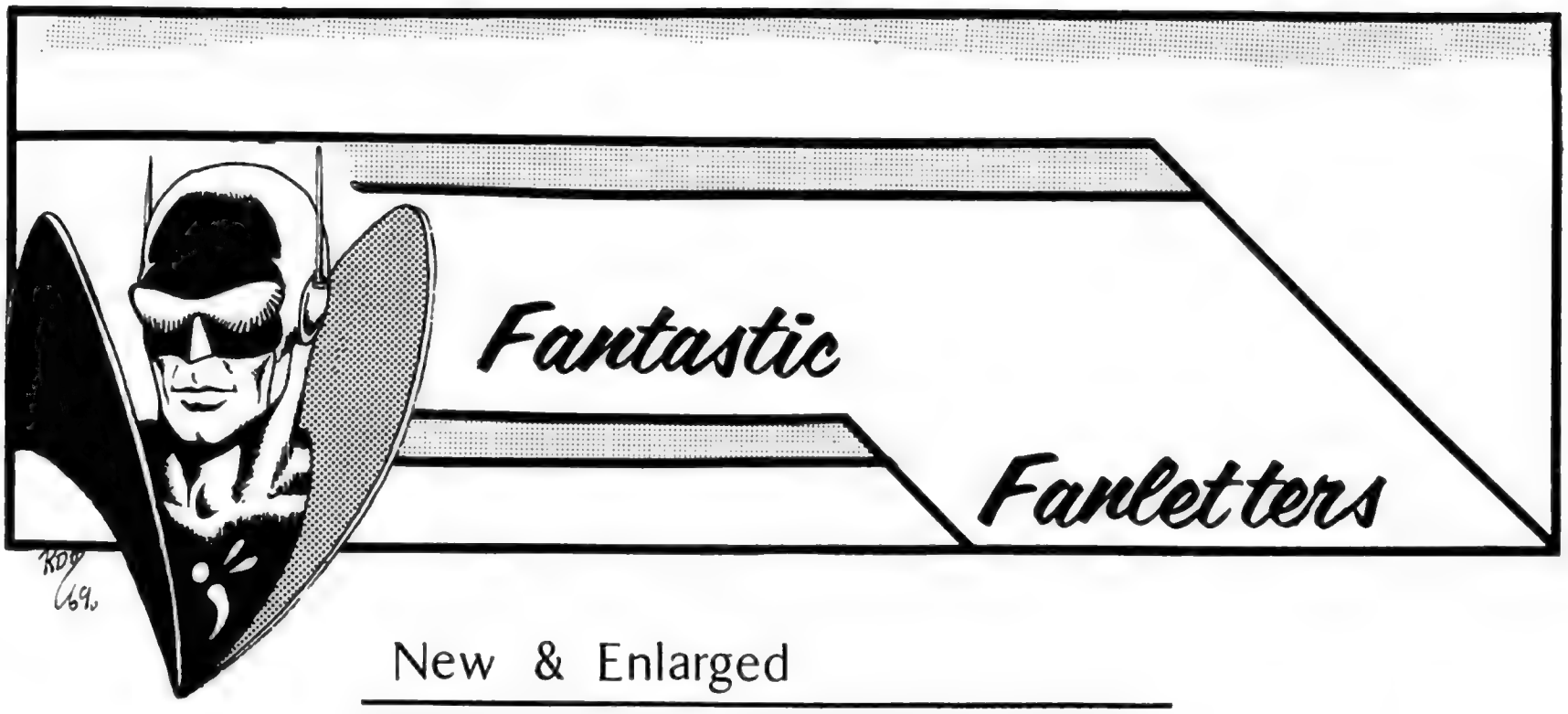

(EDITORS NOTE: Readers: Letters of Comment are desperately needed. If you can't express yourself in an article, you might be able to con-vey your opinions in a letter. Also, not only Letters of Comment on the previous issue are wanted; but also, letters, or rather short art-icles on any subject you would like to bring up! For example, read Bill Cantey's letter per-taining to Captain America's shield. These are the type letters we are looking for, also! So, pick up your pen or pencil, & start writ-ing!)

BILL CANTEY
809 Stonefield Avenue
Charlston, S.C. 29407

Dear Gary:

Marvel's dropped a few hints that Captain America's shield is of something more than ordinary, earthly materials. But any attempt to introduce a shield origin, claim-ing magical properties or even indestructib-ility would result is a deluse of letters, re-calling instances when the shield was lost or destroyed.

If you feel, the shield should be something special, consider the following: and prepare to have your imagination streched.

ODIN was so impressed by Captain America's valor that he invited Cap to Asgard, and presented him with a round shield. The shield promises protection from all earthly harm, & has a re-bounding quality similar to Thor's hammer.

The Odin Shield provides a more convincing explanation of how the Avengers were able to find Captain America in the midst of an oceon. Cap's shield and Thor's hammer were drawn together, by Odin's will.

So, Captain America's shield is a gift from the gods! Wonderful! Now, what about the times the shield was lost or destroyed? Well, the shield is indestructable, but the paint job isn't. When the number one shield is in the body shop, Cap uses a spare shield of real big deal steel. The spares can be destroyed!

I admite, that's not a very good explanation. But, it is good 'comic' thinking; and it would make Captain America's shield some-thing special without distorting his personality.

(EDITORS NOTE: First a little background info on the next letter: I recently wrote to Marvel griping about some of the inane (my personal opinion) contents of some of their letters...! Mimi Gold, Editorial Assistant, at Marvel was kind enough to write a quck reply, defending Marvel's letter policy):

MIMI GOLD
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
c/o Marvel Comics
625 Madison Ave/2nd Floor
New York, N.Y. 10022

Dear Gary,

I happen to be answering your letter personally because I believe I met you at the con in New York...

Believe me, after going through about 2 hundred letters a day, I can tell you,although your gripe about cliches in letters is valid, there are very few that do not contain a few 'Nuff Said!'s and 'Make Mine Marvel!'s. It's true that a lot could be edited out, but it's incredible how little is left to a letter once it is chopped apart! Certain books get only a small amount of letters, and we have to make do with whatever we get. We do try and be as selective as possible without making too many changes in the original letters. And then a-gain, we are giving a true cross-section os the mail we recieve. I could re-write all the letters -- but then, what would be the pur-pose of fan mail at all? The readers speak out -- in their own words, not ours. You know

the old saying about how you can't please all of the people all of the time -- well, I guess in gearing our letters pages towards the average reader, we can't please super-brained-super fans like you, so have a little mercy for us when we try to make everybody happy.....You know that can't be done!

Mimi Gold

MIKE ROBERTSON
23614 S.E. 192nd Street
Maple Valley, Wash. 98038

Dear Gary ---

Fantastic Fanzine 10 arrived today, and you weren't just blowing your own horn when you said that the Steranko cover was something else! Fantastic, and truly one of the better fanzine covers I've seen in Fandom in quite some time; keep them coming!!

I liked, for the most part, the way this issue was handled, as opposed to your previous issue, Gary. I don't know what it was,but this ish generated more enthusiasm in this reader, than the previous one - and the enthusiasm lasted until I reached the back cover of the 'zine! I just simply can't find much to comment about, it was so enjoyable!

ROBERT KOWALSKI
3872 Garvin Street
Detroit, Michigan 48212

Dear Gary,

For once, I enjoyed both covers! My reas-ons? Steranko's Captain America cover pic is self - explanatory! AlthoughCaptain America is far from my favorite hero, Steranko is my favorite artist!!

Conversely, although Dave Cockrum is far from my favorite ama-artist, ANTOMAN is and probably always will be my favorite comic hero. And I'm always happy to see someone pay trib - ute to him! For, he may be gone, but certainly not forgotten!

I've stated my feelings on interviews,before, but this one was better than other's I've persued! Dave Cockrum is one of the better ama-artists, and I can't see why he hasn't gone pro! That pic of the knight on page 4 was exc - ellent!

The Accursed Code is the best article on that topic, I've ever read! Although, some of Bill's ideas need more thought, I agree with the majority of them!

I'm kinda' partial to Ghost Rider, and have never quite forgiven Marvel for dropping him! So I thoroughly enjoyed "He Who Rides The Night Winds!"! The pin-up on the inside back cover was superb. If ANT-MAN wasn't on the reverse side, I'd probably frame it!

"Windmills of my Mind!" seems to be the type of col where the writer sits in front of the typewriter, and puts down anything that pops into his head.(Sorta like I'm writing this letter)! It's not my favorite method, but once Tony sinks his teeth into some good topics, I may change my mind. It's been known to happen, as Cockrum will attest!

The series on the Marvel Immortals sound -s promising, but I seldom comment on the 1st chapter of anything!

"Mysterious Miricale" was another Cantey Triumph! I liked the way he worked Captain America into his last yarn, and now tossing Giant Man at us without coming right out and saying it, thus avoiding a lawsuit, was great! Those strategically placed illo's say it all!!

Well, I'm out of room, 'til the FF SPECIAL...

DAVE TRANSUE
571 Ithaca Rd.
Horseheads, N.Y. 14845

Dear Gary,

For seven some issues, the FANTASIC FANZINE was not seemingly so 'Fantastic!' At best Fandom had on its hands just another mediocre addition to the already lengthy list of Mar - velzines, not really worth the price asked.But then issue 8*9 made its appearance; FF was now heftier is size, nicer looking, and an all-a - round better fanzine and very much indeed worth the cover price. Just recently, FF 10 burst upon the scene, a vertable bombshell of talent! A fanzine ranking among such greats as Sense of Wonder, Goshwow, and Yancy Street Gazette.

FANTASTIC FANZINE has finally made it!! No longer an enthusiastic 'toddler' looking for something to grasp; but now a mature'adult' ready to face the challenges ahead! But enough of this horrendously eloquent prologue to my letter; Make way for my comments on issue #10!

Logically enough, comments on the cover flow first from my pen. Words virtually can't describe this devastatingly symmetrical piece of graphic illustration! Steranko's pencils a-lone would have assured a resplendent sketch, but no, you had Joe Sinnott add his stunning, free-flowing embellishment to the sketch mak -ing it, without a shadow of a doubt, in my mind, the most beautifully drawn cover on any fanzine (this is excluding such fanzines as Spon, Squa-Tront and Witzend, of course!)

The editorial was an appropiate length; not too long, nor to short. I was disheartened by one of the statements in the editorial men-tioning that only 25 members had joined & sub-scribed to the I.O.C.C. NEWSLETTER; particular -ly when my artistic manifestations shall a-ppear in this publication. PLEASE,FANDOM DON'T LET THIS WORTHY ENTERPRISE FOLD!!

The Interview with DAVE COCKRUM was high -ly entertaining, since I've always followed & respected his artwork. And if those three mag-nificent full page illustrations, and varied spot illoes don't make you a Dave Cockrum art lover, I'm dubious as to what would! I'm de -lighted to hear he has plans of becoming pro -fessional in the near future!

Robert Kowalski's THE SEARCH, I myself find quite boring, but then again, I've never been an enthusiastic follower of Fan Fiction by any means! However, this serial seems to scrape the bottom of the barrel of banality & could very well send anyone into an involuntar -y yawning spasm.

Bill Cantey's THE ACCURSED CODE proved quite interesting, although he seems to be sug -gesting a form of slick, adult graphic maga -zine, which may take many years to evolve, if ever! Bill Cantey, and the majority of us fans can fantasize its eventual bringing about, but it doesn't seem too probably an occurence in the near future. Oh well, at least we can dream....!

The write-up on the Ghost Rider was tot-ally unnecessary in my opinion, since just a-bout all serious comic collectors have these 7 issues and are fully aware of their content..! Rather than describing such a recent comic as this one, I suggest Miss. Gorman, next time, digs up some obscure, little comic no one knows a great deal about; it would prove much more interesting.

THE WINDMILLS OF MY MIND penned by that ubiquitous italian, Tony Isabella was most def -initely the best article of the entire issue! I enjoy rambling articles, in which the author voices his opinion and comments on just about everything under the sun. Tony Isabella is a master at this type of essay, and a witty one at that! May this column enjoy a long life in your publication!

Doug Martin's Rebuttle was only of pas-sing interest, and should be a fact everyone

knows by now. I could've thought of a much better use of those two pages (such as a two page spread by John Fantucchio, although Dave Cockrum would've done nicely...!)

I delight in Gordon Matthews prose & en-joyed his article, THE PENMEN OF TERROR immen-cely!! I always enjoy hearing what Gordon has to say, no matter how many times it's been said before because he has such a refreshing manner in which he presents his material. I don't know how many articles I've read on the artists he listed (inumerable, you may rest a-ssured), but Mr. Matthews pulled through and made this a very provacative article indeed!!!

Mike Vitti's article on The Immortals was just plain boring, although this act of monot-ony was quickly undone by Bill Cantey's master -piece of craftmanship, THE MYSTERIOUS MIRAC -LE. I'm sure everyone will agree, Bill Cantey is truly the virtuoso of the short story in Fan Fiction. His articles and stories are a tremendous asset to your fanzine!

The letter colymn was nice and long, which can do nothing but improve a fanzine if the letters are intelligent and well-thought out. Try and keep the letter column approxim-ately this long as long as you keep getting cognizant correspondences.

Now, I'd like to make a few comments on the interior art of your fanzine. Most defin -itely Al Grinage and Mike O'Neal are your best spot illustration artists. Al Grinage is a fine action artist, and uses zip-a-tone quite nicely. O'Neal is just plain good. Jay Mike is an obvious admirer of Steranko's artwork (Note his Cap, Nick Fury and Penmen illoes) all show definite overtones of the Steranko style. How-ever, Jay, no matter how much you admire Ster-

anko, I think it would be wiser if you devel - oped your own style rather than poorly imitating his. I myself used to imitate Steve Ditkos style (my favorite artist), but then, someone was good enough to tell me to develop an in - dividual style of my own, and now, I'm glad he did. So you see, I'm not trying to cut you down, Jay, for I've done the same thing, just trying to offer some friendly advice..! Doug Hazlewood and Jeff Rinehart should both prove to be good fan artists, if they stick with it! William Black, another imitator (of John Buscema) should likewise develop his own style rather than wasting his talent on imitating John's work (though I must admit, I've never seen a better imitation of Buscema's work to date)! Dave Russell turned out some terrific work; he's a great artistic asset to any fan - zine.

Ooops, I'd better hurry up and this letter or it'll never get printed because of its length. The Special should prove better than # 10; hopefully each issue will be better than the last.

RICK HOWE
217 Burroughs Avenue
Beaufort, South Carolina 29902

Dear Gary;

"The Penmen of Terror" was, I think, the best article in Fantastic Fanzine # 10. I'd like to add my own opinions to what Gordon Matthews said.

Most comic book horror stories are ruined by poor plotting. Too many stories simply end with something "that couldn't happen...but it did!" Besides that, they are all too pre -- dictable. Marvel's horror stories seem to fall into this pit, despite the fact that they have good artwork, as Gordon pointed out. Chamber of Darkness and the other Marvel Spookers have the additional fault that they use too many stories from the early TALES OF SUSPENCE,TALES TO ASTONISH etc, etc. Since I've read many of these tales before, the ending (and thus,the whole story) is spoiled for me.

The best horror comics on the market seem to be those put out by National's Joe Orlando. House of Secrets, House of Mystery etc. have slightly longer stories, are more believable, and usually end on a note of irony... or "poetic justice" Despite the fact that most of the good artists mentioned by Gordon work for either Marvel or Charlton, D.C.'s spookers are almost always more enjoyable. So you see, it takes much more than a good artist to make a good story

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THE FF (FANTASTIC FANZINE) * NCS (NATIONAL COMICS SOCIETY) * SPECIAL: Photo Offset cover by Dave Cockrum of ANT MAN; Articles by NCS editor, Jay Owens, Bill Cantey, Gary R. Spiewak, and Gary Groth, with artwork by Dave Transue, Tom Crawford and Dave Cockrum; over 40 pages of work: Available for only 75¢. Order from address below.

F.F.F.F.: Fantastic Fanzine Federation of Fans: The FF's earliest innovations. Membership to this club includes a 6 month subscription to the Bombshell Bulletin, and a 5 page amat - uer comic strip. 5 Issues of each has already been printed AND published. The newsletter is usually from 4 to 6 pages each issue. There are only a very few copies left, and 50¢ will bring you 5 issues (1,2,3,4 & 5) of the Bombshell Bulletin and the comic strip, will the last issue when it's published, (very soon)! Only 50¢!!

Copies of our STERANKO cover to FF 10, and the back cover of ANT MAN on the back cover ofFF 10, printed on cardstock paper, fit for framing. Printed offset. Both for only 25¢.

SEND AWAY TO: GARY GROTH, 7263 Evantson Road, Springfield, Va. 22150. BUT THEM TODAY!!!

I suspect that many of your readers do not even read DC comics, which is a shame. Mar -vel may be the best company at present (And even that premise is open to debate), but oth -er companies are putting out some very good work, which should not go unnoticed! I'm still hoping for FANTASTIC FANZINE to open its pages to discussions of all comic books, rather than those put out by Marvel.

MANFRED GRIEFFENSTEIN
14268 Corbett Drive
Detroit, Michigan 48213

Dear Gary:

The thought of becoming co-editor of DIF -FERO has finally gotten to my head, so now I am infatuated with writing fanzines and tell -ing editors what is wrong with their mags.Per-sonally, I think you're a damn good editor, Gary. You pick good artists, have neat title -logos' for your articles, and your attempt to keep margins straight shows you care about put -ting out a 'zine. Your fault lies the written contributions.

Let's start with 'The Penmen of Terror!' Basically, there is nothing wrong with the art -icle, but it is the group of artists which Gordon chooses to write about. He should have classified the type of horror for which the artists are famous. For instance, those art -ists which made 'comic book' horror famous, or those who made paperback horror famous.(See the final installment of The Penmen of Terror this issue -ed.) Sure, Frank Frazetta's paint-ings wipe out any graphic attempt found in comics. That's because Frazetta has the best reproduction possible to reproduce his work!!! But put Frazetta in a horror comic, and you'll find many an artist 'beat' him. The same goes for Steve Ditko. In CREEPY, he can use wash & detail aplenty. But if you look at his work in Charlton or early Marvel's, you'll find him lacking in what other artists can do so much better in the comic book format. So, Gordon should have put the artists in catagories!

The Accursed Code gave no new aspect of the code. Just the same old dribel about "How crummy the code is" or "how it should be bann-ed"! Also, changing horror mags to a 50¢ for-mat in going to lose you business for sure!The horror industry of the 50's depended soley on the child for its money! Keeping the books out of the reach of children is bad business tech-nique.

The Rebuttal to the article on the fut-ure of fandom: that article had no value un-less you printed the original article along with it (FF 8*9, the FF where the original art -icle was published is still available, so I saw no point in reprinting something that was still available)! Not only that, but Doug Mar-tin himself destroys the credibility os his statements by silly, un-backed statements. One being, "No editor would write for adults", and he was referring to Stan Lee. Well, what about Al Feldstein of the old E.C. gang? If his work wasn't pointed toward the adult taste, I'll eat every single comic in my collection. The same goes for Stan. Writing stories based on racism in the American Society is not kids stuff. Not only that, but do you think the av-erage child could interpret the religious im-plications in Silver Surfer?

There are more spots in the article in which Doug puts his foot in his mouth, but I'll have to write a rebuttal to the rebuttal of... well, you get the idea!

The Immortals and the Ghost Rider artic-les were nothing more than rundowns of stuff found in Marvel Comics. Both writers should have interjected personal opinion,graphic mer-it and story interpretation in the article...! (I thought Shirely Gorman did that in her art-icle--?ed.) Isabella's column was just in its first stages, so I'll reserve comment until I see future installments.

That's it for the contents. But there was something in the letters column, which burned me up. It was Gordon Matthews comment of Stan Lee's use of blacks in comics. He said Lee made them unrealistic, that not enough were villians, and that they were always good guys. He also made the comment that there are-not many negro cops, even though many are por-trayed in Marvel Comics. First of all, Gordon, how many negro cops do you expect to find in your home town of Union City, Pennsylvannia??? It's a different story in New York. If you fol -low Marvel comics closely, you'll find black villians galore. Just a few examples are Nick Fury of SHIELD # 2, the son of Joe Robertson is a black 'racist', and many crimminal gangs have negro members.

Now, you're probably saying, "if you put down everybodu else's work, I'd like to see you do better!" Well, be expecting an article from me soon.

Quotes From The Readers

Fanzine looks GREAT! -Joe Sinnott

Thanks for FF 10. I just looked at your first issue of FF with its one corner staple, one sided printing and silhouette art reproduction. FF has come a long way.
-Steve Ditko

I just wanted to mention how much I en -- joyed FF 8*9. 10 is another fine issue!!! Great cover on FF 10!!! -Jim Jones

You're doing a darn nice job with FANTAS-TIC FANZINE, so keep it up! My only real criticism is that you seem to be a bit too much art-oriented. I would rather read text, than look at art. You're over-using Cockrum, also -- about the only place in # 10 where you didn't have his art was the one place you should have --- on his interview. -Mark Evanier

Editors Note: "Quotes from the Readers" has gone over extremely well with you FF readers, so it will be expanded to one page next issue. These are actual quotes from letters we recieve, that are too long in length to print.

Project Repay

Created by Pat Janson

PROJECT REPAY...that's what we're calling our subscription fund for our country's servicemen. It just seems to fit!

For those of you who have missed the last ish (# 10) this program is simply the establishment of a special subscription fund which is being set-up to help say thanks to those who serve our country. Even if you don't agree with our current policies, just remember, these men are fighting for us!

Our policy is to order two 15¢ subscriptions a month for two men who's names are found in the letters pages of a Marvel Comic. I recieved a letter from a serviceman a short time ago, who heard of our fund. You might be interested in some of the things he said:

"I myself, am in Viet Nam, but I am considerably luckier than others. I still manage to keep active in Fandom, though I have my duty to perform in the Navy."

He went on..."...I have seen this country, its people, its condition, and I say we are here for a very good cause! Anyway, I want you to know that I liked your idea very much, so I'm sending you $10. Use it to help a fellow serviceman "buddy" of mine. Thank you for thinking of us. May God Bless You Always."

The man's name is Bill Lund, and we owe him a real tip of the hat! If there is anybody who would like to write him, send your letters to: Bill Lund SN B849185 ---- USNSA Tan My Supply, FPO San Fransisco, Cal. 96639.

Thanks go out to those of you who have taken an early interest in this move - ment. You know who you are, but for the ben -ifit of others...

DAVID BRADSTREET: $1.00 KEN KRAFT: $1.00
GARY GROTH: $5.00 BILL LUND: $10.00
PAT JANSON: $2.00

Now, we proudly present the recipients for December -- the first to benifit from the fund. They are:

PFC Markey C. Garrison
US 5387442
TRP. C 3d Sqdr. 7th Cav.
APO New York 09033

L/CL Tomas Cleary 2420588
USMC CAG 2-7, Cap 2-7-2
FPO San Fransisco, California

JUST FOR THE RECORD:

PFC Garrison is the guy who got us started, & will recieve a subscription to Sgt. Fury,while Mr. Cleary will recieve one to Capt. Savage..! By the way, War Mags are not the only types to be given -- it just happened that way!

It's quite ironic in the case of Bill Lund. Bill was actually slated to have a subscription ordered for him in January!

It would seem that a fitting theme for the project comes from a line that I used in the introductory letter last issue: "They do so much for us, while we do so little for them!"

HELP WANTED!

We could use some help in s small way!! As I would very much like to see PROJECT RE - PAY expand in the future, I would like to hear from two of you fans who would be interested in acting as part of a committee that would be associated with the Project. All you would have to do is contact the men who are to re - cieve a subscription. So how about it? Any adventuresome people among you????

Remember, not all these men are heroes - but they are something special! I'm sure that they wouldn't mind hearing from any of you, on any topic. Just let them know that we're with them. Send your buck today to help these fine men: Send to:PAT JANSON, 1206 PONTIAC AVENUE, CRANSTON, RHODE ISLAND, 02920.

T H A N K Y O U

ANKO STERANKO STERANKO STERANKO STERANKO STERANKO STERANKO STERANKO STERANKO STER
Is in FANTASTIC FANZINE # 11!! Steranko buffs: This is the issue for you! FF 11 will feature a 10 page Interview with JIM STERANKO; a 5 Page Art Portfolio of 5 full page pencil illustrations by STERANKO; and articles on Steranko by TOP FAN Writers!

FF 11 will also feature:

A BEAUTIFUL COVER OF THE SILVER SURFER by BARRY SMITH!! This cover is fully inked by Barry and I give it my personal recomendat - ion that this cover is the very best cover ever to appear on a fanzine!

Articles include: "RUNNING MATE" Fan Fiction by Bill Cantey
"THE SECOND GOLDEN AGE" by Dave Transue
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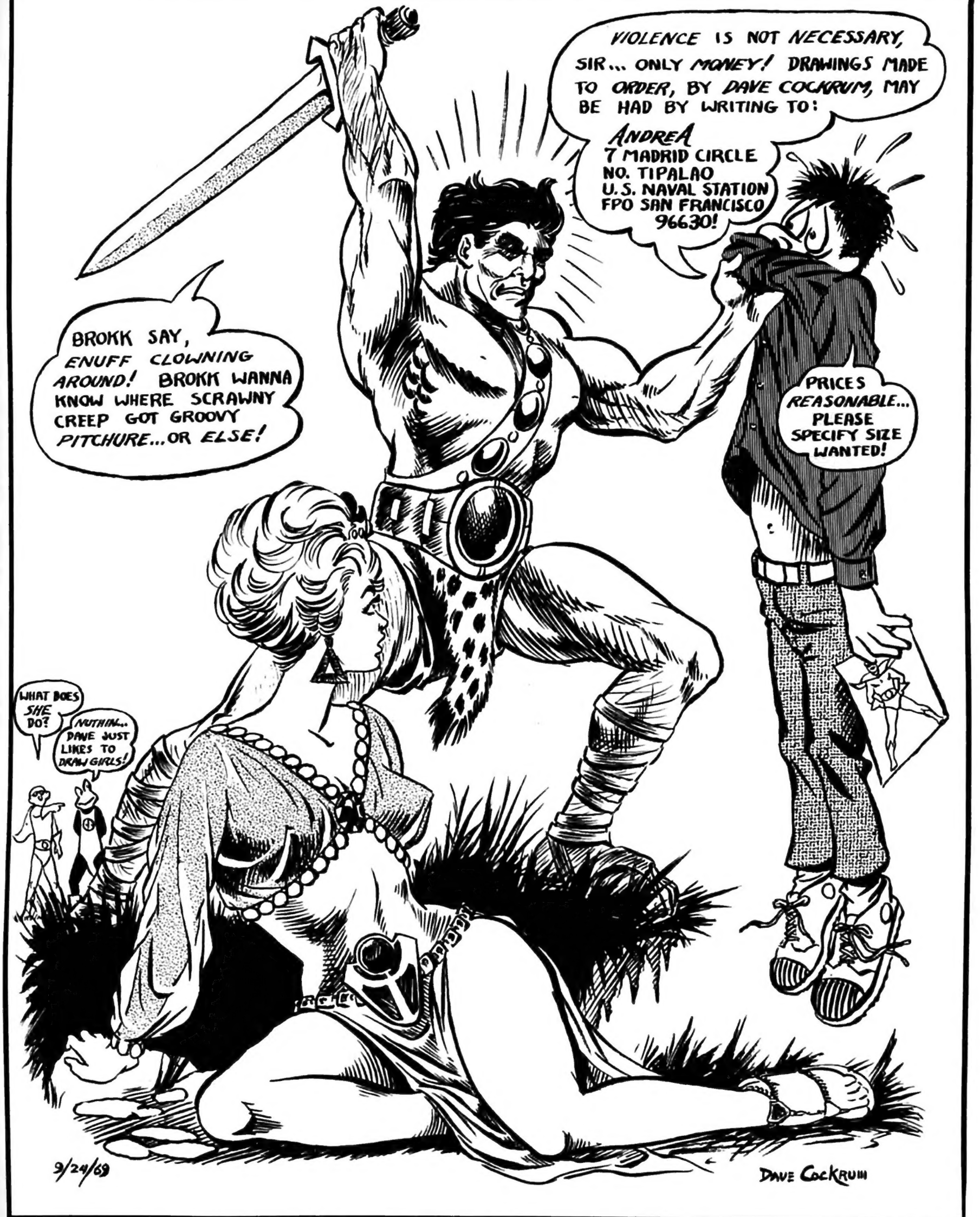
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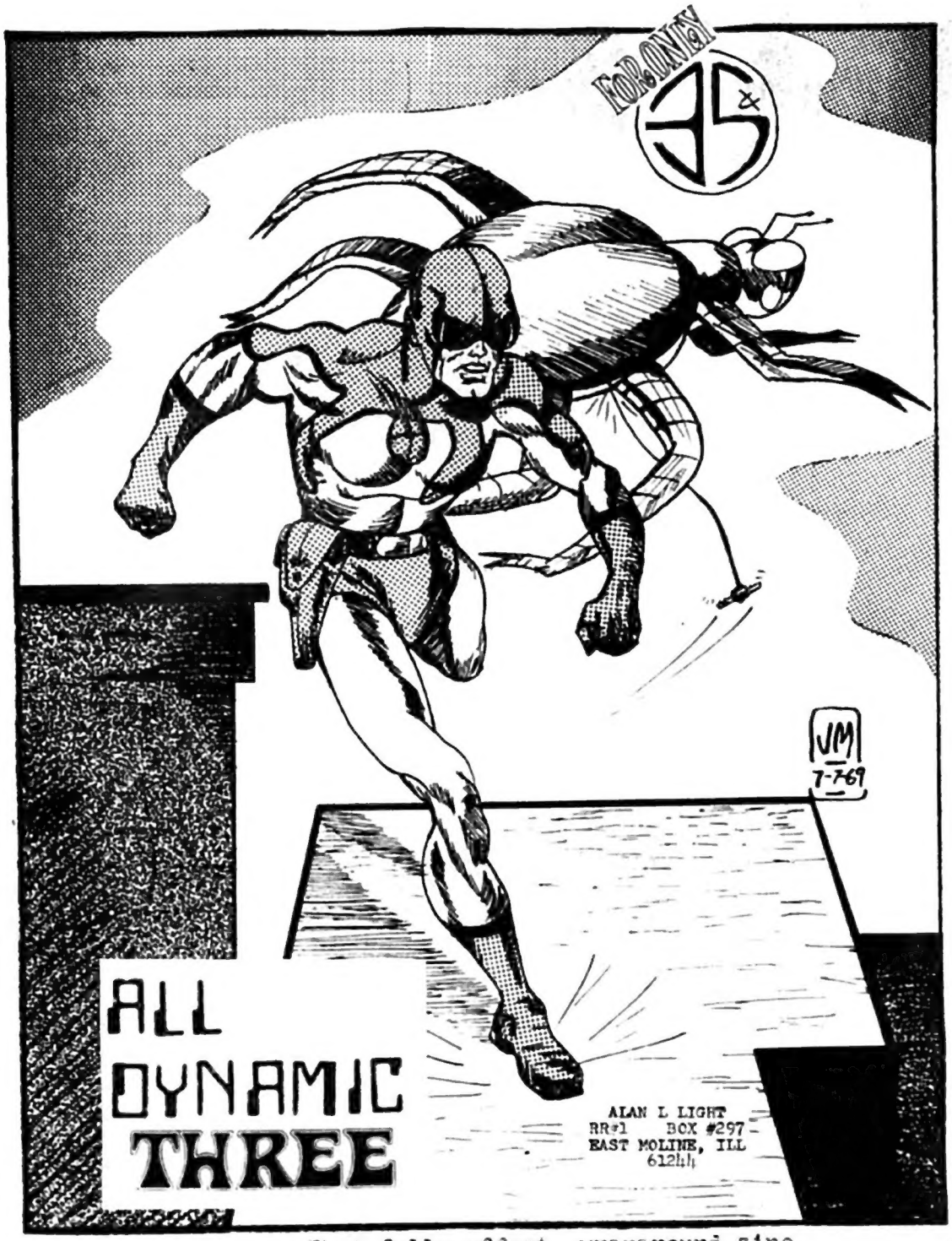

That fully offset, wraparound zine, ALL DYNAMIC, is now in it's third **BIG** 28-page issue. The cover is seen above, in black and white, but it is really in color. A-D has art by Mr. John G. Fantucchio, Steve Fritz, Alan Hanley, Mike Alroy, John McLaughlin, and about ten more highly talented illustrators. Articles:

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"DC - DYING" by Gordon Matthews. The title sums it up.
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RECOMMENDED BY FF EDITOR, GARY GROTH!

"F.F." POLL NO. 8!

READERS: This Poll Sheet is very, very, very important! I have worked very hard on some very interesting idea's to bring OUR club closer together, and to accomplish what I'm planning, I MUST get back at least 7 or 800 of these sheets. There is NO reason that there shouldn't be 100% responce towards this! Of special importance is your birthday. Please fill out the date you were born in the alotted blank!! The year you were born isn't important; the date IS! It only takes a 6¢ stamp, and while you're send - ing this poll back, write a nice, long, informative LOC (Letter of Comment) on this issue. - editor.

(PLEASE LIST IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE, THANK YOU - EDITOR.)

1. BEST FAN ARTIST:
   a. _____
   b. _____
   c. _____
   d. _____
   e. _____
2. BEST FANZINE: (EXCLUDING WITZEND AND G.S.M.):
   a. _____
   b. _____
   c. _____
   d. _____
   e. _____
3. BEST FEATURE EVER PRESENTED IN THE FF:
   a. _____
   b. _____
   c. _____
4. BEST FAN ARTIST ON THE FF'S ART STAFF:
   a. _____
   b. _____
   c. _____
   d. _____
5. BEST PRO THAT CONTRIBUTED TO FF:
   a. _____
   b. _____
   c. _____
6. BEST PRO CONTRIBUTION TO FF:
   a. _____
   b. _____
   c. _____
7. BEST FAN CONTRIBUTION TO FF:
   a. _____

(continued above)

   b. _____
   c. _____

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